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LIVES

OF

SACRED POETS:

CONTAINING

A BIOGRAPHICAL AND CRITICAL VIEW OF ENGLISH SACRED
POETRY DURING THE REIGNS OF ELIZABETH, JAMES,
AND CHARLES THE FIRST.



LIVES
OF
SACRED POETS;

BY
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OF TRINITY COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE.

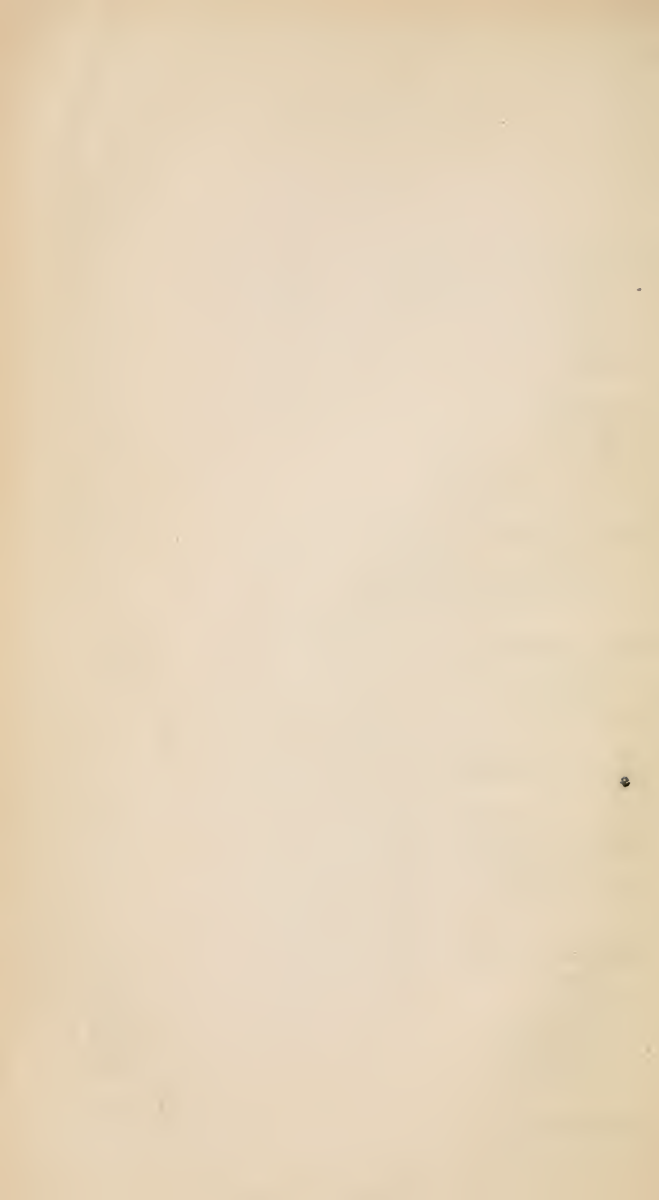
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P R E F A C E.

WHEN the Biography of Sacred Poets was first suggested to me, my memory reverted with delight to some of the least known of our elder Bards, who adorned the reigns of James and Charles the First,—I recollected that while every other species of our poetry had been illustrated by many able and industrious scholars, the fountains of Holy Song were seldom visited. Warton, in his excellent, though imperfect, history, touches very briefly on the subject; and the subsequent publications of Ellis, Southey, and Campbell, embrace too extensive a period to afford more than a passing glance at the writers of religious verse. The most valuable contribution to this department of our literature, with which I happen to be acquainted, is a little volume of *Sacred Specimens*, by the Rev. J. Mitford, containing several rare and interesting poems, but unaccompanied by any notices of the writers. This omission is to be regretted, since the Editor's taste and learning seem to have peculiarly fitted him for the task.

My own position was felt to be one of considerable difficulty. An unexplored region lay before me, abounding in treasure sufficient to realize the most enthusiastic expectations, and compensate for the most persevering toil. But it was necessary to bear in mind, that a history of English Sacred Poetry was not meditated, and that a rapid view of some of its principal culti-

vators, in addition to the more extended memoirs, was all that could be offered. This object appeared likely to be attained by the interspersion of occasional biographical and critical sketches, together with specimens. In the collection of these, some patience was required; the pearls were to be found before they could be strung; the abundance of materials, however, constituted the chief impediment. In the introduction, the amplitude of the theme became particularly apparent. Names kept thronging into my remembrance, which I had not the space to record, and which yet advanced important claims to attention.

Among these may be specified Nicholas Breton, whose poetry interests us in his fate, but the mystery of whose life cannot be removed. Sir E. Brydges inclines to the belief that that he may have been a collateral branch of the family who enjoyed the manor of Norton, in Northamptonshire. He was certainly known to Ben Jonson, whose encomiastic verses on the "Melancholike Humours," seem to intimate that the poet's sufferings were not feigned. His "Extreme Passion" must have been the genuine outpouring of unmitigated wretchedness:—

Where all day long in helpless cares,
All hopeless of relief,
I wish for night, I might not see
The objects of my grief.

And when night comes, woes keep my wits
In such a waking vein,
That I could wish, though to my grief,
That it were day again.

My sun is turn'd into a shade,
Or else mine eyes are blind,
That Sorrow's cloud makes all seem dark
That comes into my mind;
My youth to age ; or else because
My comforts are so cold,
My sorrow makes me in conceit
To be decrepit, old,—
My hopes to fears ; or else because
My fortunes are forlorn,
My fancy makes me make myself
Unto myself a scorn.

In the selection of Wither, I was influenced, not more by the hope of rescuing a writer of true genius from unmerited oblivion, than by the desire of presenting in his person an example of the efficacy of a well-grounded religious confidence upon our thoughts and actions, even when, as in Wither, it has to contend with unsettled opinions and an invincible obstinacy. Without attempting to palliate the fickleness of his political conduct, his resignation under trial may be regarded with respect. Charles Lamb has remarked that his spiritual defences were a perpetual source of inward sunshine; no imprisonment could depress his hopes, no opposition could arrest his feet in any fancied path of duty. In all his afflictions, he drank of the fountain within his breast,—a fountain nourished by the waters of peace. That he often erred was the misfortune of his nature; that he was frequently right, and always wished to be so, was caused by his religion.

A revival of Wither's poetry may not be unproductive of benefit in a higher sense than literary instruction.

In every thing he wrote can be traced the workings of an amiable and virtuous spirit. His satirical effusions are usually recommended by their freedom from personalities. Whoever expects, it has been well said, to be gratified with the peculiarities which pleased him in the satires of Dryden and Pope, will be disappointed. By Wither, vice and luxury are attacked in general, not in the abstract; as they prevail over the masses of society, not in individuals. No unhappy subject is tortured by heartless experiments in moral anatomy,—a liar, a drunkard, a scoffer, is “stript and whipt*.”

In his more serious poems, we find a cheerfulness and serenity, denoting a mind at peace with itself, and which gave to his prison-lays a sweetness irresistibly touching. His Muse does not demand our admiration by the splendour of her charms, but rather wins our love by the simplicity, the modesty, and the grace of her demeanour. We feel in her presence, as with a beloved friend, whose eyes always strike

A bliss upon the day.

In the charming words of Wither,

Her true beauty leaves behind
Apprehensions in the mind
Of more sweetness than all art,
Or inventions can impart:
Thoughts too deep to be express'd,
And too strong to be suppress'd.

Wither's existence did not glide away in idleness or meditation. He was a soldier, a magistrate, an un-

* Lamb.

wearied politician; at one time courted by the Royalists, at another by the Republicans, he was an active agent in those momentous changes which agitated the nation in the reign of Charles the First. It is singular that no attempt should have been hitherto made to combine the incidents of so varied a life. Several years ago, a selection from his *Juvenilia*, with a prefatory memoir, was announced by Mr. Gutch, of Bristol, but whether the publication was completed I have been unable to ascertain. The following account is the result of a careful examination of the poet's compositions, as well as of many of his contemporaries. No available source of information has been left uninvestigated, and much light has been thrown upon the events of his life by the researches of Sir E. Brydges and Mr. Park, whose *Catalogue Raisonné* of the works of Wither, I have frequently consulted with advantage.

I have also to acknowledge the kind assistance of the Rev. Alexander Dyce, and J. P. Collier, Esq., to the former of whom I am indebted for the loan of the *Fides Anglicana*, and the *Translation of Nemesius*; and to the latter, for the poems written by Wither during his confinement in Newgate, as well as for some extracts concerning him, from the Registers of the Privy Council, which are printed in the Supplement.

The memoir of Quarles is, I am aware, brief and imperfect; but it probably contains all that can now be related of him, and certainly more than has been told before. The reaction of public feeling is less strikingly shown in Wither than in Quarles. Many a Settle has carried away the reward belonging to a

Dryden, and Quarles has been neglected for inferior rhymers, who had not sufficient originality to fall into similar errors. Balzac excused his admiration of Tertullian by confessing the style of that Father to be obscure, yet at the same time declaring that, like the richest ebony, it was bright through the excess of darkness. I will not adapt this conceit to Quarles, but there never was an instance where more genius was destroyed, or a richer fancy misapplied. He has paid a heavy penalty for his folly. Defects which were unperceived, or unregarded during his life-time, grew into gigantic distortions beneath the microscopic criticism of a more refined age. He was elevated on the ridicule of Pope to the derision of the meanest loiterer about Parnassus. But prejudices, whose only foundation is on the shifting sands of popular opinion, must sooner or later be swept away; and for some years it has not been a disgrace to admire a few passages in the works of Quarles. His admirable Prayers and Meditations have been reprinted under the superintendence of an anonymous Editor, in whose intelligent labours we recognise the pen of Dr. Dibdin.

Quarles was not one of the butterflies of literature, whose delicate wings, to use the metaphor of Southey, must not be too rudely touched. He was a man of strongly-knit and self-relying energies, able to stand up erect and fearless against the hostility of his foes. In all real genius there dwells the power of reproduction; it is cut down only to spring up again with renewed strength. Thus the reputation of Quarles, after being crushed for a season beneath the weight of an oppres-

sive criticism, has begun gradually to lift itself from its abasement.

His personal character possesses a charm in which Wither's is deficient—that of consistency. He lived and died a disciple of the Church of England, and an unflinching defender of his Sovereign.

The life of Herbert by Izaak Walton, may seem to have precluded the necessity of any future biography of that poet; but this objection is easily obviated. The *Lives* of Walton, although interesting in their matter, and affectionate in their tone, are often tedious and unconnected; trifling events are detailed with wearying minuteness, while others of greater importance are often condensed into a few words. They read as if they had been composed in the summer evenings, by the river-side, when the honest angler's attention was divided between his rod and his memoir. This is not said with any intention of depreciating the merit of Walton, by one who has passed many a pleasant hour with him beneath the "shady mulberry tree." Much that Walton left undone, Dr. Zouch supplied, in his edition of the *Lives*. He was, however, restricted by the text of the author, and some of the notes bear a very remote reference to the subject. I am, however, happy to record my obligations to the information they convey.

I have collected a few pleasing facts relating to Herbert from Aubrey, of whose *Lives* I have availed myself whenever an opportunity occurred. The value of Aubrey's anecdotes has been sometimes underrated. Anthony Wood, in a moment of spleen, spoke of him

as "little better than crazed," and stigmatized his lapses of memory and readiness of belief by an epithet which has been invidiously preserved. But Aubrey was not more credulous than Wood, and far less intolerant. He lived, moreover, on terms of familiar intimacy with many of the eminent men of whom he wrote, and his portraits are marked by an individuality, discrimination, and life, which stamp their authenticity.

I have also endeavoured to place Herbert's poetical pretensions in a clearer light, and the specimens introduced into his Life will, I hope, in some measure vindicate his reputation from the aspersions which have been cast upon it. His opinion of the style most fitted for religious verse may be given in the words of one of his own poems.

Yet slight not these poor words ;
If truly said, they may take part
Among the best in art.
The fineness which a Hymn or Psalm affords,
Is when the soul unto the line accords.

Of his private virtues, that history will be the warmest eulogy which narrates his actions with the greatest truth. The simplicity of his manners, and the unaffected sincerity of his piety, cannot be too frequently brought before our eyes. The world is apt to overlook excellence so unpretending in her

————— busy search
Of objects more illustrious in her view.

And he will not have toiled in vain who shall succeed in impressing on the youthful reader how infinitely precious, beyond all price, are the noiseless hours of a good man's life; and how infinitely to be preferred

before all honours, are the humble flowers which blossom upon the good man's grave.

Richard Crashaw was the most conspicuous ornament of the school of which Herbert was the unconscious founder. In the preparation of his memoir—I ought, perhaps, to say the fragment of a memoir,—I have been assisted by the MS. collections of Cole, of whose labours other traces will be found in the succeeding pages. These manuscripts, amounting to sixty volumes, were bequeathed to the British Museum, with a direction that they should remain unopened for twenty years after the death of the donor. The importance of this elaborate work, which occupied the author nearly half a century, can only be understood by those who have occasion to consult it. It remains to be seen whether this appeal in behalf of the neglected beauty of Crashaw's poetry will be received with favour.

We live in times of transition, when old feelings are passing away; ancient institutions crumbling into dust. The age of romance has vanished, the age of utility has arisen in its place. Few amongst us have now the privilege of contemplating the face of Poetry in the still air of uninterrupted studies*. On every side we are saluted with the *Io!* of some new triumph of science and utility. Far be it from me to affirm that the change is not a beneficial one, or to object that the philosopher should occupy the poet's seat in our commonwealth. But it may be pardoned in one who

* The reader will remember the eloquent passage in Milton, from whence this thought is taken.

has drunk, albeit though a little draught, of the "milk of a better time," if he surveys this revolution with sensations of sorrow, and would gladly recall the days, gone by for ever, when poets were the objects of admiration and reverence, and the presence of the Sacred Muse was revealed in the common paths of human life, by the tranquillity and joy which were diffused around her.

The present volume conducts the reader to the threshold of the period which witnessed the production of *Paradise Lost*. Although a few of the poets of whom mention is made, were born subsequently to Milton, their works preceded the publication of his great poem, and the diligence of his numerous editors has shown how frequently he borrowed from their pages.

With what success the proposed outline has been filled up, the reader will determine. In the ardour of composition, some inadvertencies were unnoticed, which a less excited eye will immediately detect. These will be regarded with the greatest leniency by those who are the least likely to commit them. And if any more important mistakes should be observed, the author can only join in the petition of the industrious Strype, in the preface to the *Life of Bishop Aylmer*, that they may be forgiven in one "who looks upon himself as a frail and fallible man, and is apt enough to have mean conceits of his own performances, and is very ready to be set right, and thankful to be instructed."

TRIN. COLL. CAMB.

February 17, 1834.

LIVES OF SACRED POETS.

INTRODUCTION.

THE pleasant study of English Poetry begins with the “ornate wryting” of Chaucer; and Sir Philip Sidney might well marvel that he could see so clearly in that “grey and misty time.” The introduction of the Heroic measure forms an epoch in our poetical history*. But it was in Chaucer’s green old age, as Mr. T. Campbell has observed, that he put forth the full and ripe power of his genius in the *Canterbury Tales*. The feelings, the thoughts, and the manners of the fourteenth century, live in his verse. Who, after reading the *Tales*, does not sleep with the poet in “Southwerk, at the Tabard,” and “be erly for to rise” with the thirty pilgrims in the morning? But it should never be forgotten, in speaking of Chaucer, that he was among the first to resort to that precious fountain which his contemporary Wickliffe had opened, and that he drank of the “water springing up to everlasting life.”

From the death of Chaucer to the reign of Henry the Eighth, the nation made little progress in intellectual improvement; the morning-stars of our poetry went down in darkness, and the historian surveys a long and dreary period of war and wretchedness. Henry ascended

* See the Essay upon the Versification of Chaucer prefixed to the Edition of his works by Tyrwhit, vol. i.

the throne at a most auspicious season ; and even the evils attending his father's policy may be said to have ultimately promoted the good of the country. The rapid advances of " fine literature *," at a time when the kingdom rang with religious controversy, is indeed astonishing. The chivalrous character of the youthful Monarch, and the magnificence with which he invested the government, must have been powerful instruments in awakening the imagination. He was, moreover, well versed in the scholastic learning of the age, with which his mind had been imbued in childhood ; his praise was the theme of his noblest and most accomplished contemporaries. Erasmus beheld in him the parent of the golden age, and the amiable Melancthon delighted to compare him to the most illustrious of the Ptolemies, when the glory of Athens had passed into Alexandria, and kings rejoiced in the companionship of poets and philosophers. In the later years of his life, the mind of Henry underwent a melancholy change ; but that the love of goodness and of learning never entirely forsook him, the professorships he founded at Oxford and Cambridge, in 1540, for Greek, Hebrew, civil law, divinity, and medicine, abundantly testify †.

The Reformation, while it introduced a fresh principle in the habits and feelings of the people, especially affected the structure of our poetry. The unsealed Book was studied with enthusiasm and religious delight. The brief and troubled reign of Edward the Sixth abounded with metrical translations of various parts of

* Southey's *Specimens of the later English Poets*, vol. i.

† It is scarcely necessary to refer the reader to Turner's *History of the Reign of Henry the Eighth*, and Dr. Nott's elaborate edition of the *Earl of Surrey's Poems*, for an ingenious and interesting account of the literature of this era.

the Scriptures. The principal of these, and the only one to which I shall refer, is the well-known version of the Psalms by STERNHOLD and HOPKINS.

The metrical Psalmody of John Huss and Martin Luther, in Germany, had been followed by the translation of Clement Marôt, in France. It was undertaken at the request, and made from the version, of the celebrated Vatable, professor of Hebrew in the University of Paris, one of the most learned men of the age, and the restorer of the study of Hebrew in France. The favourite of Francis the First and his Court, Marôt's *Sainctes Chansonnettes*, became universally popular, and were sung by the Monarch and his peers. Their publication was, however, attended with much inconvenience, and some danger to the poet. The *Sorbonne* discovered errors in the translation, and complained of them to the King; but Francis, who admired the poet, paid little attention to their remonstrances, and Marot, in some verses, alludes to the offending the Sorbonne as the natural result of pleasing the King. The sale of the work was, however, forbidden, and he subsequently found it necessary to retreat to Geneva*.

The infectious phrensy of sacred song, says Warton, soon reached England, at the very critical point of time when it had just embraced the Reformation. Wyatt and Surrey had, before this period, translated various psalms into verse, but the version of Sternhold was the first introduced into the Church of England. Sternhold, who had received a collegiate education, was groom of the robes to Henry the Eighth; a situation which, we are told by Braithwait, he obtained by his poetical

* To the edition of Marôt's *Psalms* published at Geneva in 1543, Calvin prefixed a Preface. See *Dunster's Considerations on Psalmody*.

talents*. He retained his office in the court of Edward the Sixth.

Warton has pointed out a "coincidence of circumstances" between Sternhold and Marôt. They were, indeed, both laymen and court poets, and Sternhold dedicated his translation to Edward, as Marôt had done to Francis: I think the parallel extends no further. Sternhold, of a serious, ardent, and upright mind, seems to have been entirely destitute of literary talent and poetical feeling; Marôt, on the contrary, the idol of a romantic Court, negligent and luxurious in his life, was endowed with a grace of style, a sportiveness of fancy, and a pathos of sentiment, not often in later times so harmoniously blended. With him, in fact, the history of real French poetry commences; even his antiquity is only external. *Il n'y a guère*, observes La Bruyère, *entre Marôt et nous que la différence de quelques mots*. Sternhold, I believe, departed from life as he had lived, in prosperity and comfort; Marôt in poverty and destitution.

Of Sternhold's fellow-labourer Hopkins, nothing more than the profession has been ascertained; he was a clergyman and schoolmaster in Suffolk, and Warton considers him a rather better poet than Sternhold. Among the other contributors to the collective version, we may notice William Whyttingham, the friend of Calvin and Knox, and an inferior versifier even to the preceding†. Thomas Norton, more favourably known as the assistant of Lord Buckhurst in the drama of

* *English Gentleman*, p. 191. 1630.

† William Kethe (W. K.) was also a considerable contributor; M. Haslewood (*Censura Lit.* v. 10), assigns twenty-five Psalms to his pen. Soon after the accession of Mary, Kethe fled to Geneva. The names of "William Kethe and his wife" occur in the *Livre des Anglois à Genève*, November 5, 1556.

Gorboduc ; Robert Wisdome, whose fears of the Pope and the Turk were ridiculed by the “ witty, generous, and eloquent ” Bishop Corbet ; and T. C., supposed to be Thomas Churchyard, a most indefatigable writer of “ sad and heavy verses *.”

Sternhold died in 1549, and the fifty-one psalms versified by him were printed in the same year ; the complete version was published in 1562.

After the death of the Earl of Surrey, the only work of genius produced before Spenser, was LORD BUCKHURST’S *Induction to the Mirrour for Magistrates* ; the conception of his youthful mind, but abounding in the rugged grandeur and sublimity of Dante.

Under the gloomy tyranny of Mary, poetry obtained little attention ; but, though discouraged, it was not destroyed †. The River of Gold was only hidden for a season, that it might flow forth in a more majestic torrent in the happier reign of her successor.

To SPENSER must be assigned the glory of having delivered the Muse from the lethargy that had so long oppressed her. The appearance of the *Faery Queen* must

* Churchyard entitled his tribute to the memory of Whitgift, *Sad and Heavy Verses for the Losse of Archbishop Whitgift*. The supposition that the initials T. C. belong to Churchyard is rendered still more probable by his extended age. Mr. Chalmers, in his *Apology for the Believers in the Shakspeare MSS.*, observes, p. 65, (n) 2, that he discovered from the Parish Register of St. Margaret’s, Westminster, that Churchyard’s burial took place the 4th of April, 1604.

† The *Paradise of Dainty Devises* may be considered as belonging rather to the reign of Mary than Elizabeth. The first edition appeared in 1576. The terror of Mary’s Government, as Sir Egerton Brydges has observed, tended to produce a moral severity, for which some of the poems in this collection are remarkable. One of the ablest contributors is Lord Vaux ; in the first edition thirteen poems are attributed to his pen. In some we remark a plaintive tenderness, and in others a grand austerity of tone sometimes approaching to sublimity, as in the lines on the *Instabilitie of Youth*. That Lord Vaux possessed a vein of fancy, is proved by the *Assault of Cupid*, which has been inserted in Bishop Percy’s *Reliques of Poetry*. He seems to have passed a virtuous and tranquil life, and to have died about the year 1555.

have been like the sudden rushing of an "Arabian heaven" upon the night of our poetry. The rising star of Shakspeare had not yet dispelled the darkness. To the reader, whose opinion of Spenser is not formed upon an accurate acquaintance with his poems, John Wesley's advice to the Methodists, who were desirous of proceeding through a course of academical learning, may appear paradoxical: he recommended them, in their second year, to combine with the study of the historic books of the Hebrew Bible and the Greek Testament, the reading of the *Faery Queen*. And yet nothing more clearly displays the penetration of this remarkable individual than the advice referred to. That Spenser intended the *Faery Queen* to be a truly moral and religious poem, setting forth the rules and conduct of life, there can be no question. This fact, indeed, appears to be satisfactorily substantiated by a passage in Lodowick Bryskett's *Discourse of Civill Life, published in 1606**, to which Mr. Todd has the merit of having first directed particular attention. In this Treatise a desire is expressed, that Spenser would "set down in English the precepts of those parts of moral philosophy, whereby our youth might speedily enter into the right course of virtuous life;" and the poet is represented as saying, in reply, that "he had already undertaken a work tending to the same effect, which was in heroic verse, under the title of a *Faerie Queen*, to represent all the moral virtues, assigning to every virtue a knight, to be the patron and defender of the same; in whose actions, the feats of arms and chivalry, the operations of that virtue whereof he is the protector, are to be expressed; and the vices and unruly appetites that

* But written, according to the conjecture of Malone, between 1584 and 1589.

oppose themselves against the same, are to be beaten down and overcome."

In thus rendering chivalry subservient to a great moral purpose, it should be remembered that Spenser was adopting a method the most likely to render his work interesting and successful. The scenes he described had not then faded from the eyes of the people. The gorgeous tournament, and the picturesque splendour of knight-pageantry were not become old and forgotten things. Sir Philip Sidney tilted at one of the entertainments given to the French Ambassador, and not long before, in the reign of Henry the Eighth, the romantic Earl of Surrey had made a pilgrimage to Florence, the birth-place of his mistress, and publicly challenged the world in defence of her beauty. If, therefore, the story of the *Faery Queen* makes but a slight demand upon our sympathy, we must recollect that Spenser addressed himself to the sixteenth century, and not the nineteenth, and that the "fierce wars and faithful loves" were only employed "to moralize his song." Thus, in allusion to the characteristic features of Spenser's poetry, Bishop Hall speaks of his "misty moral types;" Drayton called him "grave moral Spenser;" and Milton mentions him affectionately as, "our sage serious Spenser," whom he was not afraid to think "a better teacher than Scotus or Aquinas."

But the claims of Spenser to the title of Sacred Poet are to be estimated as much by the treasures we have lost, as by those we possess. We seek in vain for his translation of *Ecclesiastes*, and of the *Canticum Cantico-rum*, the *Hours of Our Lord*, the *Sacrifice of a Sinner*, and the *Seven Psalms*. Of these precious works it would now be idle to expect the recovery.

One of the least known, though certainly not the least deserving, writers of the age of Elizabeth, was ROBERT SOUTHWELL. His poetical compositions do not entitle him to an elevated rank either by their fancy or their power, yet they contain many thoughts that often "lie too deep for tears," and as "a warbler of poetic prose," he will be found to have few rivals.

Southwell was born about the year 1560, at St. Faith's in Norfolk, and having been partially educated at the English College in Douay, he was received into the Society of the Jesuits*. In 1584 he returned a missionary to England; but his own country had few charms for the enthusiastic Jesuit. His father appears to have inclined to the reformed religion, for Southwell upbraids him with dwelling too long in the "tabernacles of sinners," and with having "strayed too far from the fold of God's church." The Epistle he addressed to his father soon after his return, is warmed by a strain of energetic eloquence. "With young Tobias," he says, "I have travelled far, and brought home some freight of spiritual good to enrich you, and medicinal receipts against your ghostly maladies. I have, with Esau, after long toil in pursuing a painful chase, returned with the full prey you were wont to love, desiring thereby to ensure your blessing. I have, in this general famine of all true and Christian food, prepared abundance of the bread of angels for the repast of your soul. And now my desire is that my drugs may cure you, my prey delight you, and my provision feed you, by whom I have been delighted and fed myself."

* Life prefixed to *St. Peter's Complaint* by J. Walter, 1817; Wood *Athen. Oxon.*; and *Dod Church History*, b. 2. p. 48. Fuller (*Worthies of Suffolk*, p. 71,) says that Southwell was born in Suffolk, upon the authority of Pitts, who professed to have been intimately acquainted with the poet at Rome.

The following allusion to the old age of his parent is marked by a quaint sublimity : “ The full of your spring-tide is now fallen, and the stream runneth to a low ebb ; your tired bark beginneth *to leak, and grateth oft upon the gravel of the grave* *.”

I regret that my limits will not allow me to offer more copious extracts from this Treatise, but to the reader who may have the good fortune to possess a copy, I can recommend it as a noble specimen of hortatory theology, which they who “ least love the writer’s religion,” may study with advantage.

The talents and piety of Southwell procured for him the friendship of many distinguished individuals, and especially of Anne, Countess of Arundel, with whom he resided in the capacity of chaplain until July 1592 †.

In this month he was apprehended on a charge of sedition, at Uxenden in Middlesex, and committed to a dungeon in the Tower, where he underwent many miseries. He was subsequently removed, through the interposition of his father, to a less wretched chamber, and the use of a few books was permitted : he chose the Bible and the works of St. Bernard. Southwell’s imprisonment lasted three years, and during that period he is said to have been put to the torture several times. How serenely he endured his afflictions may be learnt from his *Epistle of Comfort*, which is replete with the warmest piety and the most glowing imagination. At the expiration of three years he wrote to Cecil, the Lord

* Quarles has a passage very similar in his *Judgment and Mercy for afflicted Souls*, &c. “ The spring-tides of my plenty are spent, and I am gravelled on the low ebbs of want.”—See *The Widow*.

† The letters of this unfortunate lady to her children are said to be written with much piety and tenderness ; the melancholy death of Lord Arundel weighed heavily upon her spirits.—Lodge’s *Illustrations*, v. 3. p. 357.

Treasurer, entreating either that a day might be appointed for his trial, or that his relations and friends might, at least, be allowed to visit him. Cecil is said to have replied, that if he was in so much haste to be hanged, he should quickly have his desire; and the taunting threat of the minister was speedily fulfilled. On the 20th of February, Southwell was removed from Newgate, and carried to Westminster, where he was tried and condemned to death; and, on the following day, he underwent the infliction of the law at Tyburn*. He died with a calmness and piety worthy of a purer creed.

It may be urged, in extenuation of the severity exercised towards Southwell, that the season was one of more than common agitation and alarm. Numerous conspiracies continued to be formed against the Queen, and they were rendered still more dangerous by the mystery and secrecy that enveloped them. I am not aware that any satisfactory proof was furnished of Southwell's guilt, but a few words spoken in a moment of enthusiasm were sufficient to furnish the spies, scattered throughout the country, with an opportunity of denouncing him. Southwell certainly possessed the intolerance and presumption, as well as the persevering energy of his order.

The *Triumphs over Death*, and *St. Peter's Complaint*, have been reprinted, the first by Sir Egerton Brydges, and the last by Mr. J. Walter, who speaks of the author with an ardour inspired by a community of belief.

* In Stow's *Chronicle*, Ed. 1631, p. 769, Southwell is said to have suffered on the day after his conviction; but Fuller fixes the date of the execution on the 3rd of March; and in a tract entitled the *Rat Trap, or the Jesuits taken in their own net*, 1641, the 20th of September is named. —*Gent. Mag.* v. lxviii. pt. 2, p. 933. Mr. Walter, who from his acquaintance with Southwell's writings, is an authority worthy of attention, coincides with Stow.

I am induced to give an extract from the former work, both on account of its extreme elegance, and the general ignorance subsisting of the merits of the writer. It is the character of Lady Margaret Sackville upon whose death the *Triumphs* were composed*.

“She was by birth second to none, but unto the first in the realm; yet she measured only greatness by goodness, making nobility but the mirror of virtue, as able to show things worthy to be seen, as apt to draw many eyes to behold it; she suited her behaviour to her birth, and ennobled her birth with her piety, leaving her house more beholden to her for having honoured it with the glory of her virtues, than she was to it for the titles of her degree. She was high-minded but in aspiring to perfection, and in the disdain of vice; in other things covering her grace with humility among her inferiors, and showing it with courtesy among her peers. Of her carriage of herself, and her sober government, it may be sufficient testimony that envy herself was dumb in her dispraise, *finding in her much to repine at, but nought to reprove*. The clearness of her honour I need not mention, she having always armed it with such modesty as taught the most intemperate tongues to be silent in her presence, and answered their eyes with scorn and contempt that did seem to make her an aim to passion. . . . How mildly she accepted the check of fortune fallen upon her without desert, experience has been a most manifest proof; the temper of her mind being so easy that she found little difficulty in taking down her

* Lady Margaret Sackville, wife of the Honourable Robert Sackville, son and heir apparent of Thomas, then Lord Buckhurst, whom he succeeded as second Earl of Dorset in 1608. She was the daughter of Thomas Howard, Duke of Norfolk.—See Advertisement to the *Triumphs over Death*, in the *Archæica*, vol. i., 1814.

thoughts to a mean degree, which true honour, not pride, has raised to a former height ; her faithfulness and love, where she found true friendship, are written with tears in many eyes.

“Where she owed, she paid piety ; where she found she turned courtesy ; wheresoever she was known, she deserved amity ; desiring the best, yet disdaining none but evil company ; she was readier to requite benefits, than revenge wrongs ; more grieved than angry with unkindness of friends, when either mistaking or mis-report occasioned any breaches. . . . In sum, she was an honour to her predecessors, a light to her age, and a pattern to her posterity ; neither was her conclusion different from her premises, or her end from her life ; she showed no dismay, being warned of her danger, carrying in her conscience the safe-conduct of innocency. But having sent her desires before, with a mild countenance and a most calm mind, in more hope than fear, she expected her own passage. She commended both her duty and good will to all her friends, and cleared her heart from all grudge towards her enemies, wishing true happiness to them both, as best became so soft and gentle a mind, in which anger never stayed but as an unwelcome stranger.”

The following affected yet picturesque passage towards the conclusion, might have been written by Crashaw : it has all the *onction* of the poetry of that gifted and unfortunate enthusiast :

“She departed, like Jephtha’s daughter, from her father’s house, but to pass some months in wandering about the mountains of this troublesome world, which being now expired, she was, after her pilgrimage, by covenant to return, to be offered unto God in a grateful

sacrifice, and to ascend out of this desert like a stem (*steam* ?) of perfume out of burned spices*."

The poems of Southwell, like the Canticles of Racine, have few adornments of fancy. They possess all the simplicity of truth. In the dedication to his "Loving Cousin," prefixed to *St. Peter's Complaint*, he objects to the "idle fancies" with which the "devil possesses most poets," and limits his ambition to the weaving a "new web in his own loom," for which purpose he laid "a few coarse threads together:" Many of these threads have wound themselves round the heart. I ought not to forget the affectionate memorial of Southwell by Ben Jonson, who told Drummond of Hawthornden, "that so he had written that piece of his, *the Burning Babe*, he would have been contented to have destroyed many of his." Jonson, who had himself become a convert to the Roman Catholic faith, may be supposed to have felt acutely the unhappy termination of Southwell's existence; but I think his admiration of *the Burning Babe* scarcely supported by the merit of the composition, many other poems more deserved the eulogy; to employ Southwell's own affected, but expressive phrase, some of his "tunes are tears."

The lines *Upon the Picture of Death*, are very simple and touching:—

Before my face the picture hangs,
That daily should put me in mind
Of those cold names and bitter pangs,
That shortly I am like to find:
But yet, alas, full little I
Do think thereon, that I must die.

* This image is employed by Milton; the voice of the "Lady," in *Comus*, is described as rising "like a steam of rich distilled perfumes." The resemblance was probably accidental, but it deserves notice.

I often look upon a face,
Most ugly, grisly, bare, and thin ;
I often view the hollow place,
Where eyes and nose have sometimes been.
I see the bones across that lie,
Yet little think that I must die.

The gown which I do use to wear,
The knife wherewith I cut my meat,
And eke that old and ancient chair
Which is my only usual seat :
All these do tell me I must die,
And yet my life amend not I.

My ancestors are turned to clay,
And many of my mates are gone ;
My youngers daily drop away,
And can I think to 'scape alone ?
No, no, I know that I must die,
And yet my life amend not I.

If none can 'scape death's dreadful dart,
If rich and poor his beck obey,
If strong, if wise, if all do smart,
Then I to 'scape shall have no way.—
O grant me grace, O God, that I
My life may mend sith* I must die.

The allusions in the third stanza may, to some readers, appear even too natural, but the student, who has been accustomed to regard the old table upon which he writes with an affectionate interest, and to associate its "familiar face" with some long-cherished task, will appreciate the domestic pathos of the imagery. Mr. Ellis, upon the authority of Anthony Wood, assigns this poem to Simon Wastell, a native of Westmoreland, and a member of Queen's College, Oxford, in 1580. Wood

* *Since*. A word in general acceptation among all the elder poets.

fell into some strange errors with respect to Southwell; he positively asserts that *St. Peter's Complaint* was written by John Davies of Hereford, although the evidence of its being the composition of Southwell is very satisfactory*. Dr. Bliss, in his improved edition of the *Athenæ Oxonienses* has corrected this mistake.

The admirers of Southwell's poetry will not withhold their sympathy from the *Divine Centurie of Spiritual Sonnets*, by his contemporary BARNABE BARNES. This little collection of poems, originally published in 1595, has been reprinted by Mr. Park in his *Heliconia*, but, owing to the very expensive form of the work, without adding much to their popularity. Barnes, upon whom the flattery of friendship bestowed the appellation of Petrarch's scholar, while it elevated him to an equality with Spenser, was the subject of frequent satire during his life. Few particulars of his history have been preserved. He was a younger son of Dr. Richard Barnes, Bishop of Durham, and was born about the year 1569. At the age of seventeen he became a student of Brazen-nose College, Oxford, but left the university without a degree. "What became of him afterwards," says Wood, "I know not." He appears, however, to have accompanied the expedition sent to France by Elizabeth, in 1591, under the command of Devereux, Earl of Essex. He was then in his twenty-second year, and he probably remained in that country until 1594.

Nash accuses him of running away from battle, and of subsequently disgracing himself still more, by robbing

* Edmund Bolton, an old English critic, in his *Hypercritica*, has this notice of Southwell: "Never must be forgotten *St. Peter's Complaint*, and those other serious poems said to be Father Southwell's, the English whereof, as it is most proper, so the sharpness and light of wit is very rare in them."

a nobleman's steward of a gold chain. But these charges rest upon no foundation, and were probably the result of malignity on the part of Nash, who remembered that Barnes had sided with Gabriel Harvey in one of the numerous quarrels which, at that period, agitated, in no very decorous manner, the literary public *.

The sonnets, we are told by the author, were composed during his travels in France, and seem to have been viewed by him in the light of religious exercises. He speaks of them as "prescribed tasks." No person can read them, I think, without feeling his thoughts calmed, and his faith strengthened. The piety of the writer does not chill us with the austerity of its features; it is humble, joyful, and confident. In the ninety-second sonnet he says, alluding to the earnestness of his devotion,

On my soul's knees I lift my spirit's palms.

And this prayer may incline the reader to acknowledge the truth of the assertion.

O benign Father! let my suits ascend

And please thy gracious ears from my soul sent,

Even as those sweet perfumes of incense went

From our forefathers' altars, who didst lend

* Thomas Nash was the contemporary of Greene, the dramatic poet, at Cambridge, and took his B. A. degree at St. John's, in 1585. His name is familiar to all students of our old poetry, as the bitter antagonist of Gabriel Harvey. This singular man, who united to ripe scholarship a very ridiculous propensity for writing verses, enjoyed considerable popularity in his day. He was the friend of Spenser, with whom he became acquainted at Cambridge, and to whose *Faery Queen* he prefixed the sweetest lines he ever wrote. But Harvey's vanity surpassed all his other qualifications. Upon his return from Italy he dressed himself in the Venetian costume, and was remarkable for the uncommon richness and costliness of his attire. The circumstance, however, of his father having been a rope-maker at Saffron Walden, seems to have embittered his life. Hence arose his enmity to the unhappy Greene, who some weeks before his death published a tract containing reflections upon rope-makers in general.—See the very able and careful edition of the works of *Robert Greene*, by the *Rev. Alexander Dyce*, vol. i., p. 84, &c.

Thy nostrils to that myrrh which they did send,
 Even as I now crave thine ears to be lent.
 My soul, my soul is wholly bent
 To do thee condigne* service and amend ;
 To flee for refuge to thy wounded breast,
 To suck the balm of my salvation thence,
 In sweet repose to take eternal rest,
 As thy child folded in thine arms defence.
 But then my flesh, methought by Sathan fir'd,
 Said my proud sinful soul in vain aspir'd.

If Ben Jonson, as we are told by Drummond, "cursed Petrarch for redacting verses into sonnets," which he compared to that "tyrant's bed where some who were too short, were racked, others, too long, cut short," the sonnets of Barnes could not have escaped his censure. They are written with an almost constant adherence to the returning *rima* of the Italian *sonetto*, but Barnes frequently continues the sense beyond the termination of the line—a practice considered by Warton deserving of commendation.

When Dr. Bliss published his edition of Anthony Wood's *Athenæ Oxonienses*, the following address to *Content* was the only poem by Barnes with which he was acquainted, but it certainly justified his desire to know more.

Ah ! sweet Content, where is thy mild abode ?
 Is it with shepherds and light-hearted swains,
 Which sing upon the downs and pipe abroad,
 Leading† their flocks and calling unto plains !

Ah ! sweet Content, where dost thou safely rest ?
 In heaven with angels which the praises sing
 Of Him that made, and rolls at his behest,
 The minds, and parts of every living thing !

* Worthy.

† The word in the original is *sending*, but it seemed to me an error of the press.

Ah ! sweet Content, where doth thine harbour hold?
 Is it in churches with religious men
 Which praise the Gods with prayers manifold,
 And in their studies meditate it then?
 Whether thou dost in heaven or earth appeare,
 Be where thou wilt, thou wilt not harbour here.

The last couplet is sweetly pathetic.

I cannot refrain from adding one more sonnet ; to all, save the antiquarian in poetical literature, Barnes will be a new poet.

Unto my spirit lend an angel's wing,
 By which it might mount to that place of rest,
 Where paradise may me relieve opprest :
 Lend to my tongue an angel's voice to sing
 Thy praise my comfort ; and for ever bring
 My notes thereof from the bright east to west ;
 Thy mercy lend unto my soul distrest,
 Thy grace unto my wits ; then shall the sling
 Of Righteousness that monster Sathan kill,
 Who with despair my dear salvation dared,
 And, like the Philistine, stood breathing still
 Proud threats against my soul ; for heaven prepared,
 At length I like an angel shall appear,
 In spotless white an angel's robe to wear.

A passing notice may be given of HENRY CONSTABLE, another poet belonging to this period, and as little known as the preceding. His *Spiritual Sonnets to the Honour of his God and his Saints*, were first printed in the *Heliconia*, from a MS. in the Harleian collection. Of Constable himself little is known. Sir John Harrington calls him "a well-learned gentleman, and noted sonnet-writer." Malone thinks he was of St. John's College, Cambridge, and took his degree of B.A. in 1579 ; and Dr. Birch supposes him to have been a zealous Roman Catholic, and compelled, by his religious tenets, to reside abroad during

a considerable portion of the reign of Elizabeth. This opinion is countenanced by the general tone of his poems, and by several letters addressed, during his absence, to his friends in England.

He was a favourite of Ben Jonson, who speaks of "Constable's ambrosiack music."

I have only room for one Sonnet*.

TO SAINT MARY MAGDALEN.

Such as retired from sight of men like thee,
 By penance seek the joys of heaven to win,
 In deserts make their paradise begin,
 And even amongst wild beasts do angels see,
 In such a place my soul doth seem to be.
 When in my body she laments my sin,
 And none but brutal passions finds therein,
 Except they be sent down from heaven to me.
 Yet if these praises God to me impart,
 Which He inspired my blessed heart with all,
 I may find heaven in my retired heart!
 And if thou change the object of my love,
 The wing'd Affection, which men Cupid call,
 May get his sight, and like an angel prove.

Constable occasionally indulges in allusions more applicable to his "vainer hours," than these specimens of his "calmer thought." The concluding couplet of this sonnet affords an instance of this ill-taste.

Among the Harleian MSS., 6930, is a version of selected Psalms by Francis and Christopher Davison, W. Bagnall, Richard Gipps, and J. Bryan†. The MS.

* "Noble Henry Constable was a great master in English tongue, nor had any gentleman of our nation a more pure, quick, or higher delivery of conceit."—*Bolton's Hypercritica*. Unfortunately, the sonnet instanced by the worthy critic in support of his good opinion, is almost the worst ever written by the author.

† Mr. Todd mentions another MS. of this version in the Bridgewater Library, now in the possession of the Marquess of Stafford.

extends to 113 pages, and is very beautifully transcribed. Francis Davison, who is the principal contributor, has prefixed an Introduction to the translation. Specimens of these Psalms have been annexed, by Sir Egerton Brydges, to his reprint of the *Poetical Rhapsody*.

Francis Davison, well known as the editor of the *Poetical Rhapsody*, was the son of William Davison, the unfortunate Secretary of Queen Elizabeth; a man whose probity and excellence appear to have been unquestioned, even by his enemies, and who may be considered the victim of the deceit of Elizabeth, and the pusillanimous treachery of her ministers. In 1593, Francis became a member of Gray's Inn, and before he completed his twentieth year, he wrote the speeches of the *Gray's Inn Masque*, printed in Nichols's *Progresses of Queen Elizabeth*. In 1595 he was on the Continent, and, on his return, appears to have relinquished his former pursuits, and devoted himself to poetry. Mr. John Chamberlain, writing to Sir Dudley Carleton, on the 8th of July, 1602, alludes to the circumstance.—“It seems young Davison means to take another course, and turn poet; for he has lately sent out certain sonnets and epigrams*.” The first edition of the *Poetical Rhapsody* was published in 1602. The fall of his father from his rank and dignities, and his subsequent imprisonment and poverty, must have blighted the prospects of the young poet. After 1619 nothing has been discovered respecting him; and it has been supposed that he shared what has been called, with melancholy truth, the common lot of genius—“an obscure life, and an early grave†.” It was, perhaps, during hours of sorrow

* Birch's MSS., Brit. Mus. 4173, p. 125.

† *Autographs of Royal, Noble, and Remarkable Persons*, by J. G. Nichols; fol. 1829.

and penury, that these beautiful versions of the Psalms were composed; and I coincide with Sir Egerton Brydges in the opinion that they elevate the poet to a more distinguished place than his lighter compositions, written, he tells us, in his younger days, "at idle times," as he journeyed "up and down" in his travels.

The following Paraphrase of the twenty-third Psalm will show that Davison could touch the harp of Sion with a grace and skill not unworthy the "sweet finger" of the Royal Minstrel. This Psalm has also been translated by Crashaw, with a richness and felicity of diction peculiarly his own. I shall speak of it more fully in the life of that poet.

God, who the universe doth hold
 In his fold,
 Is my shepherd kind and heedful,
 Is my Shepherd, and doth keep
 Me his sheep,
 Still supplied with all things needful.
 He feeds me in fields which been*,
 Fresh and green,
 Mottled with Spring's flowery painting,
 Through which creep with murmuring crooks,
 Crystal brooks,
 To refresh my spirits fainting.
 When my soul from heaven's way
 Went astray,
 With earth's vanities seduced,
 For his namesake, kindly He,
 Wandering me
 To his holy fold reduced†.

Yea, though I stray through Death's vale,
 Where his pale

* So in the original MS.

† Reduced, *led back*.

Shades did on each side enfold me,
 Dreadless, having Thee for guide,
 Should I bide,
 For thy rod and staff uphold me.

Donne adopted this metre, with a slight variation, in his version of the 137th Psalm.

The following verse from the 130th Psalm is very beautifully rendered. The alliteration in the fourth line is the only defect.

My soul base earth despising,
 More longs with God to be ;
 Than rosy morning's rising
 Tired watchmen watch to see !

I have omitted a few lines in this version of the thirteenth Psalm.

Lord, how long, how long wilt Thou
 Quite forget and quite neglect me ?
 How long with a frowning brow
 Wilt Thou from thy sight reject me ?
 How long shall I seek a way
 From this maze of thoughts perplex'd,
 Where my griev'd mind, night and day,
 Is with thinking tired and vex'd !
 How long shall my stormful foe
 On my fall his greatness placing,
 Build upon my overthrow,
 And be graced by my disgracing ?
 Hear, O Lord and God, my cries,
 Mock my foe's unjust abusing,
 And illuminate mine eyes,
 Heavenly beams in them infusing.
 Lest my woes, too great to bear,
 And too infinite to number,

Rock me soon, 'twixt Hope and Fear,
Into Death's eternal slumber.

These black clouds will overflow,
Sunshine shall have his returning,
And my grief-dull'd heart, I know,
Into joy shall change his mourning.

Grief-dulled is a very picturesque epithet.

I shall conclude my specimens with the 86th Psalm.

Save my soul which Thou didst cherish
Until now, now like to perish,
Save Thy servant that hath none
Help, nor hope, but Thee alone !

After Thy sweet-wonted fashion,
Shower down mercy and compassion,
On me, sinful wretch, that cry
Unto Thee incessantly.

Send, O send, relieving gladness,
To my soul oppress'd with sadness,
Which, from clog of earth set free,
Wing'd with zeal springs up to Thee.

Let thine ears which long have tarried
Barred up, be now unbarred,
That my cries may entrance gain,
And being entered grace obtain.

For Thou, darter of dread thunders,
Thou art great, and workest wonders.
Other gods are wood and stone,
Thou the living God alone.

Heavenly Tutor, of thy kindness
Teach my dulness, guide my blindness,
That my steps Thy paths may tread,
Which to endless bliss do lead.

In knots to be loosed never,
Knit my heart to Thee for ever,

That I to Thy name may bear,
Fearful love, and loving fear.

Lord my God, thou shalt be praised,
With my heart to heaven raised,
And whilst I have breath to live,
Thanks to Thee my breath shall give.

Mighty men with malice endless,
Band* against me helpless, friendless,
Using, without fear of Thee,
Force and fraud to ruin me.

But Thy might their malice passes,
And Thy grace Thy might surpasses,
Swift to mercy, slow to wrath,
Bound nor end Thy goodness hath.

Thy kind look no more deny me,
But with eyes of mercy eye me ;
O give me, Thy slave, at length,
Easing aid, or bearing strength.

And some gracious token show me,
That my foes that watch t' oerthrow me,
May be shamed and vex'd to see
Thee to help and comfort me.

The fate of Davison recalls to my memory the accomplished and unfortunate Sir Walter Raleigh, whom Spenser, in a beautiful sonnet, called the *Summer's Nightingale*. I think Mr. Tytler has clearly proved, in his recent *Life of Raleigh*, that the charges of irreligion so frequently brought against him, do not at all affect his later and maturer years. The afflictions of his manhood appear to have obliterated the vain and sceptical feelings of his youth, and to have impressed his mind with a true sense of the Divine Power. During his long imprisonment, rendered still more melancholy

* Unite.

by the uncertainty of its issue, he composed one or two touching Hymns, which testify the sincerity of his heart and the piety of his feelings. Probably the last words ever traced by his pen, were the lines written in his Bible on the evening preceding his execution, in which he renewed his expression of confidence in the mercy and intercession of our Saviour.

The following Hymn requires no criticism to recommend it.

Rise, oh, my soul, with thy desires to heaven,
And with divinest contemplation use
Thy time, where time's eternity is given,
And let vain thoughts no more thy thoughts abuse ;
But down in darkness let them lie,
So live thy better, let thy worse thoughts die. .

And thou, my soul, inspired with holy flame,
View and review with most regardful eye
That holy cross whence thy salvation came,
On which thy Saviour and thy sin did die.
For in that sacred object is much pleasure,
And in that Saviour is my life, my treasure.

To Thee, O Jesu, I direct my eyes,
To thee my hands, to thee my humble knees,
To thee my heart shall offer sacrifice,
To thee my thoughts, who my thoughts only sees.
To thee myself, myself and all I give ;
To thee I die, to thee I only live.

The lover of poetry will always regret that Raleigh's retreats to his charming seat, at Sherborne, were not more frequent, and of longer continuance ; and that the "pure contents" which, in his own words, were wont to "pitch their tents" upon those pastures, were unable to detain him from the empty vanities of the court.

I bring this hasty Introduction to an end with regret ;

I have said little where my heart prompted me to say much. I have been compelled to pass over, without notice, many who left their *fame upon a harp-string*, and from whose antique leaves might be gathered thoughts of the serenest piety and peace. Of some of these I shall have an opportunity of speaking in the following pages. I have walked through the burial-ground of our Elder Poets with no irreverent footstep, and I shall not have lingered there in vain, if I have renewed one obliterated inscription, or bound one flower upon their tomb.

GILES FLETCHER.

GILES FLETCHER, the author of one of the finest religious poems to which the early part of the seventeenth century gave birth, has not received the attention due to his genius, either from his contemporaries, or from posterity. Yet in him and his brother Phineas we behold the two most gifted followers of Spenser; in their hands the torch of allegorical poetry, if I may employ the metaphor, was extinguished, and transmitted to no successor. William Browne was rather the imitator of Spenser in his pastoral vein, than in the arabesque imagery of the *Faerie Queen*. Of Giles Fletcher's life little has hitherto been told, and that little imperfectly. Mr. Chalmers has reprinted *Christ's Victorie*, with a prefatory notice of the writer, in his edition of the *British Poets*, but without adding much, if any thing, to the previous stock of knowledge. In the following memoir something has, perhaps, been accomplished towards the illustration of the poet's history, and the additional facts relating to his father will not, it is trusted, be uninteresting.

Dr. Giles Fletcher, the father of the poet, was the brother of Richard Fletcher, Bishop of London. Having been educated at Eton, in 1565, he was elected to King's College, Cambridge, where, in 1569, he took the degree of B.A.; that of M.A. in 1573; and LL.D. in 1581. Anthony Wood says that he became an excellent poet. The only specimens of his poetical talent I have seen are the verses upon the death of Walter Haddon*.

* Haddon was a member of King's College, and one of the most eminent men of the age. His contemporaries speak in enthusiastic

Fletcher's political talents appear to have been highly appreciated by Elizabeth, who employed him as her Commissioner in Scotland, Germany, and the Low Countries. I have ascertained that he sat in Parliament in 1585, with Herbert Pelham, Esq., for the then flourishing town of Winchelsea*. In 1588, the memorable year of the Armada, he was sent to Russia, where he concluded a treaty with the Czar, beneficial to English commerce. Soon after his return, he published his observations upon that country; they were, however, soon suppressed, and not reprinted until 1643. They were afterwards incorporated in Hackluyt's *Voyages*†.

The worthy Fuller informs us that, upon Fletcher's arrival in London, he sent for his intimate friend Mr. Wayland, Prebendary of St. Paul's, and tutor to Fuller's father, "with whom he expressed his thankfulness to

terms of his mental and personal accomplishments. Archbishop Cranmer entertained a high opinion of his learning and talents, and availed himself of his advice and assistance in ecclesiastical affairs. Haddon died in London, February, 1571. His poems were collected by Thomas Hatcher, a fellow of the same college, and one of his warmest admirers.

Mr. Park refers to Dr. Fletcher's poems in a note upon Warton's *History of Poetry*, but in a manner to incline the reader to suppose that the allusion was applicable to the author of *Christ's Victorie*.

The work which is entitled *Poematum Gualteri Haddoni Legum Doctoris, sparsim collectorum, Libri Duo*, is exceedingly scarce. Thomas Baker, the well-known antiquary, considered his copy, which afterwards passed into the collection of the Bishop of Ely, to be almost unique. There is, however, a copy in the British Museum.

* *Notitia Parliamentaria*, vol. iii., p. 107.

† As a picture of Russia in its deepest ignorance and barbarism, the account of the "Russe Commonwealth" is very amusing. His description of theological learning in Russia, towards the close of the sixteenth century, is singular, especially when contrasted with the glory of our own country at that period. Fletcher relates the following anecdote of a conversation with one of their "bishops, that are the choice men out of all their monasteries." He "offered him a Russe Testament, and turned him to the first chapter of St. Matthew's Gospel, where he began to read in very good order. I asked him first, what part of Scripture it was that he had read? He answered that he could not well tell. How many evangelists there were in the New Testament? He said he knew not. How many apostles there were? He *thought* there were twelve."—p. 89, ed. 1591.

God for his return from so great a danger." The quaint historian, in his careless way, talks of the emperor being habited in blood, and adds that, if he had cut off the ambassador's head, he and his friends might have sought their own amends; but, says he, the question is, *where he would have found it*. Certainly, if Fuller alludes to the head, its recovery would have been very questionable. But this story of the Czar's cruelty is an invention. The reigning emperor was Theodore Ivanowich, and Dr. Fletcher expressly assures us that "he was verie gentle, of an easie nature, quiet and merciful." P. 110, ed. 1591.

On his return, Fletcher was made secretary (town-clerk) to the city of London, and one of the Masters of the Court of Requests. The situation of treasurer of St. Paul's he seems to have resigned in 1610*. His death is thought to have taken place in the same year.

Dr. Fletcher also wrote a very curious *Discourse concerning the Tartars*, which Whiston reprinted in his Memoirs.

Giles Fletcher, the poet, we are told by Fuller, was born in the city of London†, and according to Mr. Chalmers's conjecture, about the year 1588‡. Fuller

* I find under a notice of Bayly, Bishop of Bangor — 1610, 7 Febr. Ludov. Bayly, A.M., Admissus ad Thesaurarium S. Pauli, per Resig. Egidii Fletcheri, LL.D. Reg. Lond.—Wood, *Athen. Oxon.* ed Bliss, b. 2.

† *Worthies of England*, vol. ii., London, p. 82, ed. Nichols, 1811.

‡ Chalmers (*Biograph. Diet.*, Art "FLETCHER") considers Giles the eldest son, whose birth he fixes in 1588, and that of Phineas, the younger, in 1584! The probability is, that Phineas was the elder. At the conclusion of the fourth book of *Christ's Victorie*, Giles speaks of

The Kentish lad that lately taught
His oaten reed the trumpet's silver sound.

* * * * *

Let his shrill trumpet with her silver blast
Of fair Eclecta and her spousal bed
Be the sweet pipe, and smooth encomiast,
But my green Muse hiding her younger head

received his information from Mr. Ramsay, who married the poet's widow; and it is to be regretted that his account is so brief and uncircumstantial. I think Fletcher's birth may be carried back two or three years, for we shall presently find him hailing the accession of James in 1603, in strains such as a boy of fourteen or fifteen could scarcely be expected to produce. He was sent, it appears, at an early age, to Westminster School, from which he was elected to Trinity College, Cambridge. This is the relation of Fuller; but I am unable to reconcile it with the declaration of Giles Fletcher himself. In the dedication of *Christ's Victorie*, to Dr. Nevil, he speaks with all the ardour of a young and noble heart of the kindness he had experienced from that excellent man. He mentions his having reached down "as it were out of heaven, a benefit of that nature and price, than which he could wish none (only heaven itself excepted) either more fruitful and contenting for the time that now is present, or more comfortable and encouraging for the time that is already past, or more hopeful and promising for the time that is yet to come." And further on, he expressly states that he was placed in Trinity College by Dr. Nevil's "*only favour, most freely, without either any means from other, or any desert*" in himself. This praise could not have been consistent with truth, if Fletcher had obtained his election from Westminster School*. Nevil merited the laudatory epi-

Under old Chamus' flaggy banks that spread
Their willow locks abroad, &c.

Eclecta, or Intellect, in the *Purple Island*, is the leader of the virtues and good qualities of the heart. The *Purple Island* was, therefore, composed before the publication of *Christ's Victorie*.

* Having been permitted to refer to the Register Book of Westminster School by the favour of the Rev. — Williamson, the present Head Master, I am enabled to state positively that Fletcher was *not* elected from Westminster to Cambridge. There is no evidence that he was on

thet applied to him by Camden*, whether we look upon him as the public benefactor of the college over which he presided, or in the still more endearing character of the benevolent and disinterested patron of the poor and the learned. Bishop Hacket was also a partaker of his generosity. Plume informs us, in his life of that prelate, that when Hacket's father, although personally unknown to Dr. Nevil, applied to him for his interest to procure his son's election from Westminster to Trinity College, the worthy master replied, that the boy should go to Cambridge, "or he would carry him on his own back." I shall have occasion to recur to Nevil in the life of Herbert †.

The accession of James furnished a theme of praise to all the nation; "the very poets with their idle pamphlets," writes that unwearied correspondent Mr. Chamberlain, "promise themselves great part in his favour‡." The University of Cambridge put forth its welcome under the ingenious title of *Sorrowe's Joy* §, and the writers evinced their skill in blending their mourning with gladness, and while they lamented that "Phœbe"

the foundation of the school. The probability is, that he was a Town-boy, and obtained the patronage of Dr. Nevil.

* Μεγαλοπρεπης, "Magnificent."

† For an interesting notice of Dr. Nevil, the reader is referred to Todd's *Account of the Deans of Canterbury*. He was appointed to the mastership of Trinity College by Queen Elizabeth in 1592-3, and we learn from a MS. quoted by Mr. Todd, and in his own possession, that before the departure of James from the University in 1614-15, he visited Dr. Nevil, who was too infirm to leave his rooms, and after having thanked him for the generosity and splendour of his entertainment, he concluded by saying that *he was proud of such a subject*.

‡ In a letter to Sir Dudley Carleton, April 13, 1603. Printed in Nichols's *Progresses of King James I.*

§ *Sorrowes Joy, or a Lamentation for our Deceased Sovereigne Elizabeth, with a Triumph for the Prosperous Succession of our Gracious King James.* Printed by John Legat, printer to the University of Cambridge, 1603.

was gone, they remembered that a "Phœbus" was shining in her place*.

The contribution of Giles Fletcher—*A Canto upon the Death of Eliza*—is the most poetical in the collection. It is a pastoral allegory, conceived in a spirit of grace and elegance. The monosyllabic terminations of the following lines produce an inharmonious effect, but the imagery is very rural.

Tell me, sad Philomel, that yonder sit'st
 Piping thy songs unto the dancing twig,
 And to the water-fall thy music fit'st,
 So let the friendly prickles never dig
 Thy watchful breast, with wound or small or big,
 Whereon thou leanest; so let the hissing snake
 Sliding with shrinking silence, never take
 Th' unwary foot, while thou perchance hang'st half awake.

The picture of the snake "sliding with shrinking silence," is one of the happiest touches of description I have ever seen. It would be impossible more vividly to represent the sudden rustling of the leaves, and the "shrinking" stillness that follows. The idea is partly borrowed from Virgil.

The following verses upon the "velvet-headed violets," are equally meritorious in a different manner :

So let the silver dew but lightly lie,
 Like little watery worlds, within your azure sky.

This image might have dropped from the pencil of Rubens. Every wanderer in our green lanes on a spring morning must have seen these "little watery worlds."

Phineas Fletcher has a poem in the same volume,

* See verses in *Sorrowe's Joy*, by H. Campion, of Emanuel College.

dated from King's College, but very inferior to his brother's.

Christ's Victorie was apparently composed before Fletcher took his Bachelor's degree. Fuller says, that it discovered the piety of a saint and the divinity of a doctor; the piety is more evident than the theological skill. The first edition appeared at Cambridge in 1610, and a second was not required until 1632. It is sufficiently clear, therefore, that the poem could not have been popular; and Phineas Fletcher, in some verses addressed to his brother upon its publication, entreats him not to esteem the censure of "malicious tongues*!" That Fletcher was dissatisfied with the reception of his work, may be inferred from the circumstance of his relinquishing the cultivation of the Muse, and applying himself to the study of school divinity. It is not, however, improbable that he occasionally indulged his taste in classical composition. In the library of King's College is a small MS., presented to it on the 2nd of February, 1654-5, by S. Th., supposed by Mr. Cole to mean Samuel Thoms, with this title:—*Ægidii Fletcheri versio Poetica Lamentationum Jeremiæ*†. It is dedicated, in a copy of hexameter verses, to the amiable and upright Whitgift. *Ornatissimo doctissimoque viro Do. Doctori Whitgifto Ægidius Fletcherus salutem.* Whitgift was Master of Trinity College from 1570 to June 1577, and the translation might, therefore, have been an offering of respect from the poet's father; but as the Archbishop lived till 1603, it is possible that it may have emanated from the son. Whitgift, like his friend Nevil, was a sincere encourager of learning and merit; he supported several poor

* "Upon my brother, Mr. G. F., his book intituled *Christ's Victorie and Triumph.*"

† Cole's MS. Collections in British Museum.

scholars in his own house, and enabled others to pursue their studies at the University. The author of *Christ's Victorie* may have participated in this munificence.

Though "cross to the grain of his genius," Fuller tells us that Fletcher attained to "good skill" in scholastic divinity; he had too much capacity and amplitude of mind to fail in any pursuit to which he devoted his attention. A fellowship at the same time rewarded his labours, and enabled him to gratify his love of a College-life. Fuller does not inform us in what year Fletcher received ordination, but it could not have been long after the publication of his poem; for in 1612 he published at Cambridge, in 12mo., *The Young Divine's Apology for his continuance in the University, with certain Meditations*, written by Nathaniel Pownoll, late student of Christchurch College, Oxon, and dedicated to the eloquent Dr. King, at that time Bishop of London. This book I have not been able to obtain, and I am indebted for the knowledge of its existence to the MS. collections of the indefatigable Cole*. It would certainly tend to illustrate the poet's history.

Of Fletcher's theological acquirements we have no memorials; but we are entitled to conclude that he was an able and earnest preacher. We learn from Fuller, that

* Since this paragraph has been written, I have looked into Watts's *Bibliotheca Britannica*, vol. 2, and find the following notice:—"Pownoll, Nathaniel, late student of Christ Church, Oxford. *The Young Divine's Apologie for continuing so long in the Universitie, with certain Meditations*, Canterbury, 1612, 12mo." Of course it is impossible to reconcile this account with Cole, whose expressions are, "In 1612, he (G. Fletcher) printed at Cambridge, *The Young Divine's Apologie for his continuance in the University, with certain Meditations*, written by Nathaniel Pownoll, late student of Christ's College, Oxon, and dedicated to John, Bishop of London, among the uncatalogued books of the old University Library." The general accuracy of Watts is well known, and I believe the collections of Cole have an equal claim to that distinction. In this instance I feel inclined to follow the authority of Cole, for it is evident that he had himself seen the book.

when he preached at St. Mary's, his prayer before the sermon usually consisted of one entire allegory, "not driven but led on, most proper in all particulars." The few specimens we possess of his prose, afford sufficient testimony of his learning and eloquence; but of the propriety of his allegorical prayers I may be permitted to entertain a doubt.

After 1612 there is a blank in the history of Fletcher, until his settlement in the rectory of Alderton, in Suffolk. Fuller says, that he was placed there "by exchange of livings;" but it seems improbable that he would have relinquished any other preferment for a situation which is supposed to have hastened the period of his death. I think it very likely that he was presented to the living by Sir Robert Naunton, whose family were the patrons of the church, and had their residence in the parish*. Naunton† was Public Orator during several years of Fletcher's residence at Cambridge, and being himself a member of Trinity, it was natural that he should be desirous of forming an acquaintance with an individual so much esteemed as the author of *Christ's Victorie* must have been by many of his contemporaries.

Fletcher did not live long to reap the advantage of his new preferment; the unhealthiness of the situation combined with the ignorance of his parishioners to depress his spirits and exhaust his constitution; a lonely village in the maritime part of Suffolk, more than two hundred years ago, had few consolations to offer to one accustomed to the refined manners and elegant occupations of an University. We are told by Fuller, in that

* *Magna Britannia*, vol. 5, Suffolk, ed. 1730.

† Elected Public Orator 27th July, 1594; succeeded by F. Nethersole, 10th December, 1611.

quaint manner for which he is remarkable, that Fletcher's "clownish and low-parted parishioners (having nothing but their shoes high about them), valued not their pastor according to his worth, which disposed him to melancholy and hastened his dissolution*."

Fletcher's death is supposed to have taken place about the year 1623†. But Fuller, the only authority upon whom we could, in this instance, safely rely, has left a blank for the last figure. The disquiet of his later years, together with his absence from books, and the derangement of his papers, caused him to be sometimes unsatisfactory with regard to accuracy in dates; his omission cannot now be remedied. I am enabled to state, through the kindness of the Rev. Addington Norton, the present Rector of Alderton, that no record of Giles Fletcher

* In the edition of Phineas Fletcher's *Piscatory Eclogues*, at Edinburgh, 1771, the Editor applies a garbled version of this story to Dr. Giles Fletcher, the poet's father. He professes to have derived his information from a *Historical Dictionary of England and Wales*, 1692. After enumerating some particulars, in the life of Dr. Fletcher, the writer adds, "in the end of his life he commenced Doctor of Divinity; and, being slighted by his clownish parishioners, he fell into a deep melancholy, and in a short time died." Mr. Chalmers, in his *lives of Giles and Phineas Fletcher*, refers to the Editor of this edition, "the most of whose judicious notes, preface, &c." he scrupulously retained, and the one I have quoted among the number. So carefully are errors bequeathed from one "judicious" editor to another.

That negligent and tasteless writer, Jacob, committed a still more ridiculous blunder in his *Poetical Register*, where he says, that Giles Fletcher wrote a poem called *Christ's Victory*, and his other brother, George Fletcher, was author of a poem entitled *Christ's Victory Over and after Death*, both of them very much commended, v. 2, p. 57. It was in an evil hour that Jacob forsook the more congenial studies that fitted him for the composition of the *Law Dictionary*. For this mistake, however, Jacob was indebted to his model Winstanley (*Lives of the most famous English Poets*, 1687, p. 159), whose puerile conceits and affected phraseology render his errors less endurable than the matter-of-fact manner of his imitator.

The same accomplished critic gives Herbert to Oxford. Winstanley was originally a barber, an occupation for which he was probably well adapted.

† Lloyd's *State Worthies*, vol. 1, p. 552—note, with additions by Whitworth.

is preserved, either in the church or the parish, and the register-books only go back to the year 1674.

Giles Fletcher left a widow, who was subsequently married to Mr. Ramsay, the minister of Rougham, a small village in Norfolk. From this individual, both Fuller's and Lloyd's information respecting the poet was derived, and it could have been wished, in this instance, that they had allowed their curiosity greater scope. Of Mr. Ramsay I know nothing. Cole mentions a person of that name who was junior Proctor in 1616.

Such is the brief amount of the imperfect intelligence I have been able to gather respecting Giles Fletcher. Of his manners and conversation, of all that imparts a peculiar interest to biography, no anecdotes have been preserved. The earlier years of his life were spent in the cloistered quiet of a College, and his later days, we have reason to fear, were worn out in sorrow and sickness. His most lasting memorial exists in his poem, and in it we may discover the spirit of the author looking mildly and beautifully forth. Into the merits of this composition, I propose to enter somewhat at length.

The life of Phineas was equally unobtrusive with his brother's, and more happy in its termination. He was admitted from Eton, a scholar of King's College, Cambridge, in 1600, where he took his degree of B.A. in 1604, and that of M.A. in 1608: he subsequently became a Fellow of the College*. In 1621 he was presented to the living of Hilgay, in Norfolk, by Sir Henry Willoughby, and probably retained it until his death, which is supposed to have happened about 1650, in which year he was succeeded by Arthur Tower,

* *Dyer's History of the University of Cambridge*, v. 2, p. 195.

admitted by the Committee of plundered ministers*. P. Fletcher passed many of his youthful days among his father's friends, in Kent. His poems contain frequent allusions to the beauty of its scenery, and a desire is expressed to pipe his simple song in "some humble Kentish dale," in "woody Cranebrook," or on "high Brenchley Hill," or by the "rolling Medway." The poetry, and the learning of Wyatt and Sidney, have endeared Kent to the lovers of literature. The ancestors of Waller, of Cowper, and of Hammond, had also their seats in this county.

P. Fletcher's poems, although not published until the author was "entering upon his winter," we learn from the dedication to Mr. Edward Benlowes, were the "raw essays" of his "very unripe years." Of his principal composition, *The Purple Island*, it does not come within my plan to give an elaborate account. It was praised by Cowley, and Quarles addressed the author as the Spenser of the age. Much of the picturesque fancy of the *Faery Queen* certainly plays over the ingenious eccentricities of *The Purple Island*. Fletcher possessed, in no small degree, the same rich imagination, the same love of allegorical extravagances, and the same sweetness and occasional majesty of numbers. But of all the qualities required to form a poet, Fletcher was especially deficient in taste, in that sense of the soul, which, by a kind of Ithuriel instinct, examines every image and epithet, and rejects them when not accordant with the dignity of the art. No man of genius, with the exception of Fletcher,

* Blomefield's *Essay towards a Topographical History of the County of Norfolk*, 11 vols. 8vo. London, 1805-10, v. 7, p. 373. Mr. Chalmers, who refers to this History, takes no notice of its author's error in calling P. Fletcher the brother of the Bishop of London, who, we have seen, was his uncle.

and Quarles, who meditated a poem on a similar subject, would have thought of versifying the structure of the human body. Many parts of the *Purple Island* read like one of Sir Astley Cooper's lectures turned into metre. Fletcher's medical acquirements must have been considerable. But in the midst of all the wearying minutiae of physiological details, the reader is sometimes refreshed by touches of pure and natural description, worthy of Thomson or Burns. How exquisite is this picture of the lark:—

The cheerful lark, mounting from early bed,
 With sweet salutes awakes the drowsy light;
 The earth she left, and up to heaven is fled—
 There chants her Maker's praises out of sight.

Purple Island, c. 9, st. 2.

I return to the consideration of *Christ's Victorie*.

In his address *To the Reader*, Fletcher endeavours to conciliate the prejudices entertained by many against religious poetry. "What should I speak, he says, of Juvencus, Prosper, and the wise Prudentius; the last of which living in Hierom's time, twelve hundred years ago, brought forth in his declining age so many and so religious poems, straitly charging his soul not to let pass so much as one either night or day without some divine song: and as sedulous Prudentius, so prudent Sedulius was famous in this poetical divinity, the coëtan* of Bernard, who sang the history of Christ with as much devotion in himself as admiration to others, all of which were followed by the choicest wits of Christendome—Nonnus translating all St. John's Gospel into Greek verse; Sannazar, the late living image and happy imitator of Virgil, bestowing ten years upon a song, only to cele-

* The contemporaneous.

brate that one day when Christ was borne unto us on earth, and we (a happy change) unto God in heaven* ; Thrice honoured Bartas, and our (I know no other name more glorious than his own) Mr. Edmund Spenser (two blessed souls) not thinking ten years enough, laying out their whole lives upon this one study."

The following eloquent passage may be compared with Sidney's *Defence of Poesie* :—

"To the second sort, therefore, that climinate poets out of their city gates as though they were now grown so bad, as they could neither grow worse nor better, though it be somewhat hard for those to be the only men should want cities, that were the only causers of the building of them, and somewhat inhuman to thrust them into the woods, who were the first that called men out of the woods.

"I would gladly learn what kind of professions these men would be intreated to entertain that so deride and disaffect poesy. Would they admit of philosophers, that after they have burnt out the whole candle of their life in the circular study of sciences, cry out at length, *se nihil prorsus scire* ? Or should musicians be welcome to them that *Dant sine mente sonum*, bring delight with them indeed, could they as well express with their instruments

* I conclude that Fletcher alludes to Sannazar's poem, *De Partu Virginis*, which obtained for the author the title of the *Christian Virgil*. If we pardon the poet's improper selection of a subject, we shall find little to blame in the execution. But Fletcher is in error with regard to the time employed in the composition of the poem. I believe it occupied Sannazar twenty years. The MS. was regularly submitted to an aged critic, Poderico, to satisfy whom the poet sometimes *re-wrote the same verse ten times*. It has been remarked that the *limæ labor*, has not communicated any appearance of *constraint* to the work. It may be added, that this poem obtained the warm praise of the celebrated Pope Leo the Tenth. Its great defect consists in the union of Pagan superstition with Christian truths; had Sannazar more carefully followed his model, Fracastorius, he would not have fallen into this gross solecism of taste.

a voice, as they can a sound. Or would they most approve of soldiers, that defend the life of their countrymen, either by the death of themselves or their enemies?

“If philosophers please them, who is it that knows not that all the lights of example to clear their precepts are borrowed by philosophers from poets; that without Homer’s examples, Aristotle would be as blind as Homer. If they retain musicians, who ever doubted but that poets infused the very soul into the inarticulate sounds of music—that without Pindar and Horace, the Lyrics had been silenced for ever? If they must needs entertain soldiers, who can but confess that poets restore that life again to soldiers, which they before lost for the safety of their country; that without Virgil, Æneas had never been so much as heard of. How can they, for shame, deny common-wealths to them, who were the first authors of them; how can they deny the blind philosopher that teaches them, his light; the empty musician that delights them, his soul; the dying soldier that defends their life, immortality after his own death. Let philosophy, let ethics, let all the arts bestow on us this gift, that we be not thought dead men whilst we remain among the living; it is only poetry can make us be thought living men when we lie among the dead. And, therefore, I think it unequal to thrust them out of our cities, that call us out of our graves, to think so hardly of them that make us to be so well thought of, to deny them to live awhile among us, that make us live for ever among our posterity.”

If Fletcher’s sermons were composed in this style, their loss deserves to be lamented.

The poem is divided into four cantos, and opens with a stanza so antithetically constructed as, in some mea-

sure, to impair the solemnity of the subject ; but Fletcher soon rises into a nobler strain when he thinks of those

Sacred writings, in whose antique leaves
The memories of heaven entreated lie*.

Milton's Invocation to the Holy Spirit in the *Paradise Regained* is considered by Mr. Dunster "supremely beautiful;" it does not surpass the solemn and enraptured piety of Fletcher :—

O thou that didst this holy fire infuse,
And taught this breast, but late the grave of hell,
Wherein a blind and dead heart lived, to swell
With better thoughts; send down those lights that lend
Knowledge how to begin, and how to end,
The love that never was, and never can be penn'd.

In the first canto, *Christ's Victorie in Heaven*, the poet traces the redemption of man to the pleadings of Mercy, who dwelt in the quiet of that Sabbath where "saintly heroes" rest from their labours. When Mercy beheld the ruin of that "Golden Building," once illuminated with every "star of excellence," she is represented lifting up "the music of her voice" against the decrees of fate.

The interposition of offended Justice is grandly conceived :—

But Justice had no sooner Mercy seen
Smoothing the wrinkles of her Father's brow,
But up she starts, and throws herself between;
As when a vapour from a moory slough
Meeting with fresh Eöus, that but now
Open'd the world which all in darkness lay,
Doth heaven's bright face of his rays disarray,
And sads the smiling orient of the springing day.

* My quotations are made from the original edition of 1610. The orthography only is modernized.

She was a virgin of austere regard,
Not as the world esteems her, deaf and blind,
But as the eagle, that hath oft compar'd
Her eye with heaven's, so, and more brightly shin'd
Her lamping sight ; for she the same could wind
 Into the solid heart, and with her ears
 The silence of the thought loud speaking hears,
And in one hand a pair of even scales she wears.

No riot of affection revel kept
Within her breast, but a still apathy
Possessed all her soul, which softly slept,
Securely, without tempest ; no sad cry
Awakes her pity, but wrong'd Poverty
 Sending her eyes to heaven swimming in tears .
 And hideous clamours ever struck her ears,
Whetting the blazing sword that in her hand she bears.

The winged lightning is her Mercury,
And round about her mighty thunders sound ;
Impatient of himself lies pining by
Pale Sickness, with his kercher'd head up wound,
And thousand noisome plagues attend her round :
 But if her cloudy brow but once grow foul,
 The flints do melt, the rocks to water roll,
And airy mountains shake, and frightened shadows howl.

Famine and bloodless Care, and bloody War,
Want, and the want of knowledge how to use
Abundance, Age, and Fear that runs afar
Before his fellow Grief, that aye pursues
His winged steps ; for who would not refuse
 Grief's company, a dull and raw-boned spright,
 That lanks the cheeks and pales the freshest sight,
Unbosoming the cheerful breast of all delight.

Before this cursed throng goes Ignorance,
That needs will lead the way it cannot see ;
And, after all, Death doth his flag advance,
And in the midst Strife still would roguing be,
Whose ragged flesh and clothes did well agree .

And round about amazed Horror flies,
And over all, Shame veils his guilty eyes,

And underneath Hell's hungry throat still yawning lies.

Justice is portrayed leaning her bosom upon "two stone tables spread before her;" and the poet, in order to impress more deeply the fearful horror of that "scroll" on the mind, makes the terror and darkness of the Appearance upon Mount Sinai to rush upon our memory, when the affrighted children of Israel, like

A wood of shaking leaves became.—

The grandeur and dignity of Justice are expressed by the hush and stillness of the entire universe, waiting in awe for the opening of her lips*. In this silence of heaven and earth, Justice proceeds to accuse and convict man of wickedness and ingratitude. But in this part of the poem Fletcher forgot the sublimity of the occasion; he amuses himself with a sort of metaphysical ingenuity, as when speaking of Adam's covering of leaves he asks,

————— for who ever saw

A man of leaves a reasonable tree?

And in some of the verses he seems to have studied that epigrammatic brevity and rapidity of interrogation, which so delighted his brother's eccentric friend, Quarles; but though the author of the *Enchiridion* might hang a garland at "the door of those fantastic chambers," every true lover of Fletcher's poetry will regret to see him lingering within their threshold.

I must not, however, omit the 28th stanza:—

What, should I tell how barren Earth is grown
All for to starve her children? Did'st not thou
Water with heavenly showers her womb unsown,

* Milton saw the force of this conception; at the conclusion of the speech of the "Eternal Father" to the Angel Gabriel,

. all heaven

Admiring stood a space, then into hymns

Burst forth.

Par. Reg., b. 1, v. 170.

And drop down clouds of flowers? Did'st not thou bow
 Thine easy ear unto the plowman's vow;
 Long might he look, and look, and long in vain,
 Might load his harvest in an empty wain,
 And beat the woods to find the poor oak's hungry grain.

The effect of the address of Justice is given with great sublimity:—

She ended, and the heavenly Hierarchies
 Burning in zeal, thickly imbranded were:
 Like to an army that alarum cries,
 And every one shakes his ydreaded spear,
 And the Almighty's self, as he would tear
 The earth, and her firm basis quite in sunder,
 Flam'd all in just revenge, and mighty thunder,
 Heaven stole itself from earth by clouds that moisten'd under.

The awful grandeur of celestial indignation seems to lift itself up in the majesty of these lines. The sudden preparation of the heavenly warriors, the clangor of arms and the uprising of the Deity himself, are splendid images, which are known to the reader of *Paradise Lost* not to have escaped the notice of Milton. The pause at the beginning of the stanza is a note of solemn preparation.

The reappearance of Mercy in the midst of darkness and tumult is very picturesque; her face soon glimmers through, and paints the clouds with beauty—

As when the cheerful sun, elamping wide,
 Glads all the world with his uprising ray,
 And woo's the widow'd earth afresh to pride,
 And paints her bosom with the flow'ry May,
 His silent sister steals him quite away:
 Wrapt in a sable cloud from mortal eyes
 The hasty stars at noon begin to rise,
 And headlong to his early roost the sparrow flies.

But soon as he again deshadow'd is,
 Restoring the blind world his blemish'd sight,
 As though another day were newly his,
 The cozen'd birds busily take their flight,
 And wonder at the shortness of the night.

So Mercy once again herself displays,
 Out from her sister's cloud, and open lays
 Those sunshine looks whose beams would dim a thousand days.

The poet then describes the charms of Mercy in verses sparkling as the "discoloured plumes" of the graces that attend upon her. His "golden phrases flie" in a stream of "choicest rhetoric."

The gentleness of Mercy is contrasted with the haggard wretchedness of Repentance:—

Deeply, alas, impassioned she stood,
 To see a flaming brand toss'd up from hell,
 Boiling her heart in her own lustful blood,
 That oft for torment she would loudly yell ;
 Now she would sighing sit, and now she fell
 Crouching upon the ground in sackloth trust,
 Early and late she pray'd, and fast she must,
 And all her hair hung full of ashes and of dust.

The reader may remember the picture of Remorse in the introduction to the *Mirroure for Magistrates*:—

And first within the porch and jaws of hell,
 Sat deep remorse of conscience, all besprent
 With tears ; and to herself oft would she tell
 Her wretchedness ———.

Fletcher wanted the energy of Sackville's iron pen. The impersonations of Dread, Revenge, Misery, and Death, placed by that writer in the Porch of Hell, have never been surpassed. They stand out in the ghastly reality of life, and fill the mind with a solemn visionary terror.

When Mercy beheld the wretched form of Repentance sitting in "a dark valley" she sent to comfort her one of her loveliest attendants, "smiling Eirene *,"

———— That a garland wears
Of gilded olive on her fairer hairs.

There is one exquisite line in the 82nd stanza, in allusion to the shepherds at the nativity:—

And them to guide unto their Master's home,
A star comes dancing up the orient.

The first canto concludes thus:—

Bring, bring, ye Graces, all your silver flaskets,
Painted with every choicest flower that grows,
That I may soon unflower your fragrant baskets,
To strew the field with odours where he goes,
Let whatsoe'er he treads on be a rose.

So down she* let her eyelids fall, to shine
Upon the rivers of bright Palestine.

So beautifully does the poet strew with flowers the path of the infant Jesus.

The second canto, *Christ's Victorie on Earth*, opens with the temptation of our Saviour in the wilderness. The fanciful prettiness of Fletcher contrasts displeasingly with the calm and dignified narrative of Milton, who, without departing from the text of Scripture, where it is said, *Jesus was led up of the Spirit into the wilderness*, has invested it with a poetical character. Fletcher's picture of our Saviour upon "a grassy hillock laid," with "woody primroses befreckled," does not impress us like Milton's description of Him, who the "better to converse with solitude," entered the

———— bordering desert wild,
And with dark shades and rocks environ'd round,

* Peace.

† Mercy.

pursued "his holy meditations." The silence of the desert dwells around us!

In the representation of our Lord's personal appearance Fletcher has manifested a still greater absence of judgment; it is principally formed from the Canticles, and in a style of fantastical colouring, peculiarly displeasing in a sacred poem. The author might, however, have pleaded the prevalent taste of the age in extenuation. Two nights the Saviour has passed in "the silent wilderness," making "the ground his bed, and his moist pillow grass," when he discovers afar off an old palmer, "come footing slowly," who entreats him to bless his lowly roof with his presence. Milton concurred with Fletcher in concealing the Prince of Darkness under the form of an aged man. This similitude appears to have been generally adopted. In *La Vita et Passione di Christo*, published at Venice in 1518, a wooden cut is prefixed to the Temptation, in which Satan is represented as an old man with a long beard, offering bread to our Lord. In Vischer's cuts to the *Bible*, as noticed by Thyer, the tempter is an *aged man*, and Mr. Dunster has pointed out the same circumstance in the painting of the Temptation by Salvator Rosa*.

They wander along together until they arrive at a dismal abode, the *Cave of Despair*—

E'er long they came near to a baleful bower,
Much like the mouth of that infernal cave,
That gaping stood, all comers to devour,
Dark, doleful, dreary, like a greedy grave
That still for carrion carcases doth crave.

The ground no herbs but venomous did bear,
Nor ragged trees did leave; but every where
Dead bones and skulls were cast, and bodies hanged were.

* See Todd's *Works of Milton*, v. 4, preliminary observations, p. 18.

Upon the roof the bird of sorrow sat,
Elonging joyful day with her sad note,
And thro' the shady air the fluttering bat
Did wave her leather sails, and blindly float,
While with her wings the fatal screech-owl smote
 Th' unblessed house ; there, on a craggy stone,
 Celeno hung, and made his direful moan,
And all about the murdered ghosts did shriek and groan.

Like cloudy moonshine in some shadowy grove,
Such was the light in which Despair did dwell ;
But hē himself with night for darkness strove.
His black uncombed locks dishevell'd fell
About his face ; thro' which, as brands of hell
 Sunk in his skull, his starry eyes did glow,
 That made him deadly look, their glimpse did show
Like cockatrices' eyes that sparks of poison throw.

His clothes were ragged clouts, with thorns pinn'd fast ;
And as he musing lay, to stony fright
A thousand wild Chimeras would him cast :
As when a fearful dream in midst of night
Skips to the brain and phansies to the sight
 Some winged fury, straight the hasty foot,
 Eager to fly, cannot pluck up its root :
The voice dies in the tongue, and mouth gapes without boot.

Now he would dream that he from Heaven fell,
And then would snatch the air afraid to fall ;
And now he thought hē sinking was to Hell,
And then would grasp the earth, and now his stall
Him seemed Hell, and then he out would crawl :
 And ever as he crept would squint aside,
 Lest him, perhaps, some fury had espied,
And then, alas ! he should in chains for ever bide !

The most material features of this description, remarks Mr. Headley *, are taken from Spenser's *Fairy Queen*, lib. i., canto 9, st. 33, 36. This, he adds, is a curious

* *Select Specimens*, vol. i. p. 81.

instance of plagiarism, and serves to show us how little ceremony the poets of that day laboured under in pilfering from each other. If Giles Fletcher had been living, he would probably have thought the critics of this day laboured under very little ceremony in accusing the "poets of that day" of thefts, without sufficiently examining their extent. From the following portion of the 33rd stanza of the *Faerie Queen*, Fletcher borrowed, it will be seen, two lines :

Ere long they came where that same wicked wight,
His dwelling has in a low hollow cave.

* * * * *

Dark, doleful, dreary, like a greedy grave,
That still for carrion carcases doth crave.

The other plagiarism is found in the dress of despair ; but the value of the "ragged clouts," and the thorns that fastened them, is very small, and forms no material feature of the picture. Spenser partly borrowed his own description from Sackville. Fletcher, who was a most diligent student of the works of Spenser, had his great prototype continually before his eyes, and his sweet words floating in his ears. In reading the description of the *Cave of Dispair*, I have been reminded of one or two passages in the *Faerie Queen* ; in the second book, where Mammon conducts Guyon to see his treasure, we find "sad Celeno sitting on a clifte."

Into this cave "the serpent woo'd him with his charms" to enter, but without success. Our Lord is next transported to

———— The sacred pinnacles that threat
With their aspiring tops Astræa's starry seat.

Here was spread the pavilion of Presumption. This allegory is in the style of Spenser ; but Milton, by keep-

ing closer to the scriptural account, has produced a sublimer effect. The "specular mount," from whence are beheld all the cities and empires of the East, Niniveh and Babylon, and Ecbatana, and the city of the Hundred Gates, is a magnificent picture.

When Presumption has in vain endeavoured to tempt the Saviour to throw himself from the mountain, in rage and despair, "herself she tumbled head-long to the floor," while a choir of angels receives our Lord, and bears him to an "airy mountain." Suddenly an enchanted garden springs up in that cold solitude,

As if the snow had melted into flowers.

The following stanza might have flowed from the "golden mouth" of Milton.

Not lovely Ida might with this compare,
 Though many streams his banks besilvered,
 Though Zanthus with his golden sands he bare,
 Nor Hybla, though his thyme depastured,
 As fast again with honey blossomed,
 Nor Rhodope's nor Tempe's flowery plain,
 Adonis' garden was to this but vain,
 Though Plato on his beds a flood of praise doth rain.

The aspect of the garden is described in a line breathing the glowing beauty of oriental poetry ;

The garden like a ladie fair was cut,
 That lay as if she slumbered in delight.

Upon a "hilly bank" was built "the bower of Vain-Delight," and through this false Eden, the "first destroyer," led our Saviour. Throughout this canto, Fletcher evidently had the pictures of Spenser before his eyes ; the fount of silver, the "plump Lyæus," and the shadows of the "drunken elms," all whisper of the

great author of the *Faerie Queen*. But if Fletcher borrowed from Spenser, he in turn has been imitated by Milton. We are reminded of the

Table richly spread, in regal mode,—(*Par. Reg.* b. 2.)

which Satan caused to rise up in the desert before Jesus, with the attending Naiades bearing “fruits and flowers from Amalthea’s horn,” and the fair “ladies of the Hesperides.” Milton does not, indeed, like Fletcher, employ them as objects of temptation, an assumption not sanctioned by the Evangelists; but (as Bishop Newton has remarked) with greater propriety makes them the subject of debate among the wicked spirits themselves. The hand of Milton, at least in a sacred theme, was always guided by a religious fear and awe.

The song put into the mouth of the Sorceress by Fletcher, is an excellent specimen, the only one extant, of his lyrical talents; and probably furnished Herrick with a hint for his beautiful little poem—*Gather ye Rosebuds*.

The third book is entitled *Christ’s Triumph over Death*, and commemorates the crucifixion of our Lord. I have already alluded to Fletcher’s want of art in the composition of his poem, and of order in the narrative. The third book is particularly open to this objection: some parts are, however, very sublime. The traitor Judas, suffering under the horrors of an accusing conscience, is worthy the pencil of Michael Angelo.

When wild Pentheus, grown mad with fear,
Whole troops of hellish hags about him spies,
Two bloody suns stalking the dusky sphere,
And two-fold Thebes runs rolling in his eyes;
Or through the scene staring Orestes flies,

With eyes flung back upon his mother's ghost,
 That with infernal serpents all imbost,
 And torches quench'd with blood, doth her stern son accost.

* * * * *

Yet oft he snatched, and started as he hung—
 So when the senses half enslumbered lie,
 The headlong body ready to be flung
 By the deluding fancy from some high
 And craggy rock, recovers greedily,
 And clasps the yielding pillow half asleep,
 And as from heaven it tumbled to the deep,
 Feels a cold sweat through every member creep.

Euripides might have written these stanzas in the season of his solemn inspiration. In the "staring Orestes," we seem to behold the wretched mourner burst from the enfolding arms of the weeping Electra, and fleeing in horror from the furies surrounding his couch*.

The poet describes Joseph of Arimathea at the cross. The still grief of the humble and affectionate mourner is very affecting.

But long he stood in his faint arms upholding
 The fairest spoil heaven ever forfeited,
 With such a silent passion grief unfolding,
 That had the sheet but on himself been spread,
 He for the corse might have been buried.

The departure of Joseph and his companions from the sepulchre is in the same spirit.

Thus spend we tears, that never can be spent
 On him that sorrow now no more shall see.

* * * * *

Here bury we

This heavenly earth ; here let it softly sleep,
 The fairest Shepherd of the fairest sheep.

So all the body kist, and homewards went to weep.

In the fourth canto, *Christ's Triumph after Death*,

* Τας αίματωπους καὶ δρακοντωδεῖς κορας.—Euripid. *Orest.* l. 250.

Fletcher dwells upon the resurrection of our Saviour, his ascension to his throne in heaven, and the everlasting happiness prepared for the good and virtuous in the kingdom of Paradise.

The following stanza is not, so far as the knowledge of the writer of this notice extends, surpassed in the whole range of our poetry : every word is full of beautiful meaning.

No sorrow now hangs clouding on their brow,
 No bloodless malady empales their face,
 No age drops on their hairs his silver snow,
 No nakedness their bodies doth embase,
 No poverty themselves and theirs disgrace ;
 No fear of death the joy of life devours,
 No unchaste sleep their precious time deflow'rs,
 No loss, no grief, no change, wait on their winged hours.

And the next is little inferior : the picture of the cloud has exceeding delicacy of fancy ; it is like a sketch from the pencil of Claude.

And if a sullen cloud, as sad as night,
 In which the sun may seem embodied,
 Depriv'd of all his dross, we see so white,
 Burning in melting gold his watry head,
 Or round with ivory edges silvered ;
 What lustre superexcellent will He
 Lighten on those that shall his sunshine see,
 In that all glorious court, in which all glories be ?

The impersonation of the Deity is in the true spirit of Hebrew poetry, or rather, perhaps, in the conclusion at least, of that beautiful mysticism of which Taylor, in his majestic prose, has furnished such splendid examples :—

In midst of this city celestial,
 Where the eternal Temple should have rose,
 Lightened the Idea Beatifical:
 End and Beginning of each thing that grows,
 Whose self, no end nor yet beginning knows ;

That hath no eyes to see, nor ears to hear,
Yet sees and hears, and is all eye, all ear,
That nowhere is contain'd, and yet is every where.

Changer of all things, yet immutable,
Before and after all, the first, and last,
That moving all, is yet immoveable,
Great without quantity, in whose forecast
Things past are present, things to come are past;
Swift without motion, to whose open eye
The hearts of wicked men unbreasted lie,
At once absent and present to them, far and nigh.

It is no flaming lustre made of light,
No sweet concent, or well-tim'd harmony,
Ambrosia, for to feast the appetite,
Or flowery odour mixt with spicery,
No soft embrace, or pleasure bodily;
And yet it is a kind of inward feast,
A harmony that sounds within the breast,
An odour, light, embrace, in which the soul doth rest.

Although several poems had appeared in Italy, founded upon the life and temptation of our Saviour, Fletcher claims the merit of having been the first in our own country who strung his lyre to so noble a theme. In the management of the subject he was naturally influenced by the genius of the *Faerie Queen*, a new edition of which had been published in 1596. Spenser died in 1598-9. At this time Fletcher could scarcely have been more than eleven or twelve years old; but it is evident that his study of Spenser's poem commenced at a very early period. In the foregoing remarks it has been sometimes necessary to bring Fletcher into direct comparison with Milton. The *Paradise Regained* terminates with the temptation of our Lord, and cannot, therefore, be said to possess that completeness expressed in the title, and demanded by the nature of the subject. I am aware that

this opinion is at variance with that of far better and abler judges, but I shall endeavour to support it at a more convenient season in the life of Milton.

The peculiar excellencies of the *Paradise Regained* and *Christ's Victorie*, are not difficult to define. In Scriptural simplicity of conception, and in calm and sustained dignity of tone, the palm of superiority must be awarded to Milton; while in fertility of fancy, earnestness of devotion, and melody of expression, Fletcher may be said to stand, at least, upon an equality with him. *Christ's Victorie* is rather a series of pictures than a poem; it is deficient in unity, and that concentration of interest essential to the success of such a composition.

The power of the writer comes out in occasional touches of great vigour and beauty, indeed, but rendered comparatively ineffective by their uncertainty. His poem, to employ his own magnificent image, does not fling out—

Such light as from main rocks of diamond,
Shooting their sparks at Phœbus, would rebound.

It has not the lustre of one great luminous whole, unbroken in the purity of its splendour; its brilliancy is dazzling, but fragmentary.

Mr. Headley calls *Christ's Victorie* a rich and picturesque poem, though *unenlivened by impersonation*. The author of *Select Specimens* has received the full meed of praise for talent and ingenuity; his accuracy is not always unimpeachable. If *Presumption*, *Vain Glory*, *The Sorceress*, *The Spirit of Evil*, &c., are not impersonations, then there are no impersonations in the *Faerie Queen*.

I will not protract these remarks any longer; enough has been said, I hope, to induce the reader to examine the poem for himself, and *Christ's Victorie* only requires to be known, that it may be appreciated.

ONE of the most popular works of the reign of James, was SYLVESTER's translation of *The Divine Weeks of Du Bartas*. The first part was published in 1598, but the folio edition appeared in 1621, recommended by eulogistic verses, by Daniel, Ben Jonson, Hall, and others. Jonson afterwards told Drummond, "that he wrote his verses before it, ere he understood to confer." But he need not have retracted his praise on the score of Sylvester's unfaithful translation; for the principal merit of the work consists in the occasional beauty and originality of some of the epithets and images.

Du Bartas was highly esteemed in England. Sir John Melvil mentions him in his memoirs:—"The Ambassadors were not well embarked when M. Du Bartas arrived here to visit the King's majesty, who, he heard, had him in great esteem for his rare poesy, set forth in the French tongue." In five or six years the editions of Du Bartas' poems exceeded thirty, and yet his name has now passed into a proverb in France to express *la barbarie et le mauvais gout de style*. Goëthe has truly observed that the just appreciation of what is pleasing with reference to the country, to the period, and the moral state of a people, constitutes taste properly so called, and instances Du Bartas, who has received in Germany the appellation of King of the French poets.

Wood says that Sylvester was an accomplished scholar. In addition to his versions from Du Bartas and Pibrac, whom Montaigne called *bon M. de Pibrac*, and whose *Quatrains* have been rendered into all languages, he made some translations from the Latin of Fracastorius, the learned friend of Cardinal Bembo*.

* Bishop Hall seems to have entertained a very favourable opinion of Sylvester's religious poetry. In alluding in his *Epistles* to his own

He died at Middleburgh, in Holland, after a life of adversity, on the 28th of September, 1618, in the 55th year of his age. "By what circumstances he was induced to quit his native country," says Mr. Chalmers, "we have not discovered." From Cole's MS. collections we learn that he was Secretary to the Company of Merchants in Middleburgh, in 1617, and it was probably with a view of obtaining this situation that he left England*. Poor Sylvester had few inducements to remain in his own country; his poetical talents only procured him fame and flattery, and on this diet, like many of his brethren, he found it very difficult to subsist.

Mr. Dunster, in his considerations on Milton's early reading, has very ingeniously, and in many instances successfully, endeavoured to prove the obligations of the writer of *Paradise Lost* to the poems of Sylvester. Sylvester undoubtedly enriched our language with some picturesque epithets. His characteristics of the *sweet-numbered Homer*, the *clear-styled Herodotus*, and the *choice-termed Petrarch*, are not more gracefully poetic than critically correct. The melody and richness of some of his pictures of nature entitled him to the appellation bestowed by his contemporaries, of the "silver-tongued." The *rose-crowned Zephyrus*, and the *saffron-coloured bed of Aurora*, are worthy of Theocritus or Anacreon. Perhaps the whole range of our poetry does not present a more exquisite descriptive couplet than the following:—

Arise betimes, while th' opal-coloured morn
In golden pomp doth May-day's door adorn.

metrical versions from the *Psalms*, after praising the "two rare spirits of the Sidneys," he observes, "our worthy friend, Mr. J. Sylvester, hath showed me how happily he hath sometimes turned from his *Bartas* to the sweet singer of Israel."

* In Brit. Mus., No. 5880, p. 89. Cole ascertained this circumstance from the list of subscribers to Minshicus' Dictionary, in 1617.

IN 1623 appeared the perfect edition of DRUMMOND'S *Flowers of Sion*, or Spiritual Poems. Drummond, of Hawthornden, is endeared to our remembrance by his loyalty, his learning, and his poetry. The unhappy termination of the life of King Charles, to whom he was devotedly attached, is thought to have hastened his own dissolution. Mr. Gifford has very severely commented upon what he calls Drummond's hypocrisy towards his friend, Ben Jonson; but it should be recollected, that the journal in which the objectionable remarks were entered, was strictly private, and never intended by the author to have seen the light. But if Drummond's opinion of Jonson's character was incorrect, Jonson's estimation of his friend's poetical talents was equally ill-founded. If Drummond's verses "smelled" of the "schooles," they were generally the schools of nature*. Not one of his contemporaries had a heart more susceptible of her music, or looked out upon her beauty less frequently through the "spectacles of books." His petition to his Lute appears to have been answered, and she often discoursed to him with the sweetness of that pastoral tone when she dwelt with her "green mother, in some shady grove†."

The following specimen is not selected for its superior excellence, but on account of its being less frequently quoted than others. It breathes a high and moral dignity, and is remarkable for the ingenuity with which the original metaphor is preserved:—

Of this fair volume which we World do call,
If we the sheets and leaves could turn with care
Of Him who it corrects, and did it frame,

* Jonson said, that Drummond's verses "smelled too much of the schooles."

† See the sonnet to his *Lute*.

We clear might read the art and wisdom rare;
Find out his power which wildest arts doth tame,
His providence extending every where,
His justice which proud rebels doth not spare,
In every page, no period of the same :
But sillie we, like foolish children, rest
Well pleased with coloured vellum, leaves of gold;
Fair dangling ribbons, leaving what is best,
Of the great Writer's sense ne'er taking hold.
Or if by chance we stay our minds on aught,
It is some picture on the margin wrought.

To some of my readers the pleasant spot where Drummond passed so many happy and innocent days may be known. Hawthornden is situated on the North Esk, about half a mile below Roslyn Castle. The house stands upon the summit of a precipice overhanging the sides of the river, and immediately beneath it are several curious caverns. In a small detached cave Drummond is said to have composed many of his poems. The *Cypress Grove* is also the title of a very eloquent essay, probably written in the same solitude*.

* *Scenes in Scotland*, with historical illustrations and biographical anecdotes, by J. Leighton. I have seen with pleasure the announcement of an edition of the poems of Drummond, with a biographical memoir by Mr. Peter Cunningham, the son of the poet. His name is, at least, an augury of good.

GEORGE WITHER.

IT has been the fashion among critics and readers of poetry to regard Wither only as a fanatical rhymers and an intemperate puritan; yet, during the longest and brightest period of his life, he was neither. A puritan, indeed, in its true signification, he never was. It has been well observed, that no man was ever written down except by himself. Wither's political follies had, during his later years, been gradually erasing from the public remembrance the sweetness of his early poetry; and the wit and festivity accompanying the Restoration, tended still more to depress his fame. The accomplished Rochester and his companions held the popular mind in a more silken bondage. From the criticism and taste of this season Wither could not hope either for favour or justice. The virulence of party feelings obscured the judgment even of the antiquary Wood; he saw in Locke a prating fellow, and in Milton a villanous incendiary. That Wood, in another place, rendered homage to the singer of *Paradise Lost*, only proves that the partisan was lost for a while in the admirer of that immortal composition. In days when Milton was only a blind old man, Wither had no right to complain that his poems "were accounted mere scribbles, and the fancies of a conceited and confident mind." Heylin had long before called him an old puritan satirist; and Butler, in his *Hudibras*, made him the drunken companion of the voluminous Prynne, and the despicable Vicars. Philips, in the *Theatrum Poetarum*, added his mite of contumely; and Dryden, Swift, and Pope, did not forget to follow his example. Swift, indeed, while sneering at Wither,

manifested his taste and discernment by including Dryden in the censure.

In more recent times, critics have not been wanting, equally unkind, and equally uninformed, with respect to the object of their ridicule. Even the amiable and learned Bishop Percy had nothing better to say of the author of the *Shepherd's Resolution*, and other pastorals, indisputably among the finest of the kind in our language, than that he had "distinguished himself in youth by some pastoral pieces that were not inelegant." Ritson, while confessing that Wither's more juvenile productions would not discredit the first writer of the age, could not refrain from adding, that by "his long, dull, puritanical rhymes, he obtained the title of the English Bavius." This appellation has never been traced beyond Ritson, and may be considered the dull invention of his own pen. The prejudice of Swift and of Ritson has found inheritors in our own day. Mr. D'Israeli, whose ingenuity and talent have met with the praise they deserve, was only able to discover that "this prosing satirist has, in some pastoral poetry, strange to say, opened the right vein*." Yet, this "prosing satirist" had written, in the morning of his days, poems, with which the juvenile efforts of Dryden, of Pope, or of Cowley, can bear no comparison; and affording examples of versification singularly correct and musical, and breathing the manly fervour of pure and idiomatic English. Other names of equal influence might be added to the list; but it is pleasing to reflect, that amid all the clamour of petulant ignorance, some hands have been held up in the poet's favour. Dr. Southey, in one of his latest works, has not been ashamed to find in the neglected leaves of Wither,

* *Quarrels of Authors*, vol. 2, p. 254.

“a felicity of expression, a tenderness of feeling, and an elevation of mind*.” A word of kindness from one who has “built up the tombs” of so many of our elder poets in a beautiful criticism, ought to be adequately esteemed. Sir Egerton Brydges and Mr. Park have also exerted themselves in the poet’s cause, and to their many and careful labours the writer of the following memoir has already acknowledged his obligations.

George Wither was born at Bentworth, near Alton, in Hampshire, and, according to Anthony Wood and Aubrey, on the 11th of June, 1588; but Dalrymple and Park, upon the authority of a copy of *Abuses Stript and Whipt*, in the possession of Mr. Herbert, have fixed the poet’s birth in 1590. The register of baptisms at Bentworth affords no assistance, the earliest entry beginning in 1603. But a conclusive evidence in support of Wood and Aubrey is furnished by Wither himself, in a pamphlet entitled *Salt upon Salt*, where he says, in August, 1658,—

When I began to know the world and men,
I made records of what I found it then,
Continuing ever since to take good heed
How they stood still, went back, or did proceed;
Till of my scale of time ascending heaven,
The round I stand in maketh ten times seven.

The “ten times seven” will carry his birth back to 1588.

George Wither, the poet’s father, was descended from the Withers of Manydowne, near Wotton St. Lawrence, in the county of Hants, where one of the family was recently residing.

* Memoir of Taylor, in *Lives of Uneducated Poets*.

He had three sons, George, James, and Anthony. The poet's mother was Ann Serle*.

George received his early education in the neighbouring village of Colemore, under John Greaves, a celebrated schoolmaster "of those parts," whose merits the young poet honoured in an epigram annexed to *Abuses Stript and Whipt*, and regretted his inability to do more than repay,

In willingness, in thanks, and gentle words,
the affectionate interest and care of the tutor.

Wither's father appears to have been in opulent circumstances, for many years after the poet spoke of the easy luxury of his youthful days:—

When daily I on change of dainties fed,
Lodged, night by night, upon an easy bed,
In lordly chambers, and had wherewithall,
Attendants forwarder than I to call,
Who brought me all things needful; when at hand,
Hounds, hawks, and horses were at my command.
Then choose I did my walks on hills or vallies,
In groves near springs, or in sweet garden allies:
Reposing either in a natural shade,
Or in neat harbours, which by art were made,
Where I might have required, without denial,
The lute, the organ, or deep sounding vial,
To cheer my spirits; with what else beside
Was pleasant, when my friends did thus provide,
Without my cost or labour.

Britain's Remembrancer, canto 3.

* An account of the pedigree of Wither's ancestors has been given by Sir Egerton Brydges, in the first volume of the *Restituta*, from the visitation book of Hampshire, in 1634. The family, which originally came from Lancashire, had been seated in Hampshire many years before the birth of the poet. In 1810, the representative of another branch of the family, Wither Bramstone, Esq., was residing in the adjoining parish of Deane.

In the spring of 1603, Wither was sent to Magdalen College, Oxford*, and entered under John Warner, afterwards Bishop of Rochester, a sound logician, and a good and ripe scholar. Wither confessed in later times, that if he had not reaped all the advantages of a collegiate education, it was not because he had been "ill entered:" he left the school of Greaves, no stranger to "Lilly's Latin, or Camden's Greek." His poetical talents were speedily developed. While at Magdalen College he is thought to have composed the graceful *Love-Sonnet*, printed in Ritson's *Ancient English Songs*†. Mr. Park has questioned the genuineness of this poem; but Ritson attributed it to Wither, upon the authority of Hearne,

* Not 1604, as Wood, Park, Ritson, &c., assert. Wither's own words are, that he was sent to Oxford

The very spring before I grew so old,
That I had almost thrice five winters told.

Abuses Whipt and Stript.

Of James Wither, son of John Wither, of Manydown, who died in 1627, at the age of 28, a Fellow of New College, Oxford, a memorial is placed within the cloisters, near the chapel.

† P. 205. The sonnet is quoted by Ritson, from a Miscellany, in 12mo., entitled *A Description of Love, with certain Epigrams, Elegies, and Sonnets; and also Master Johnson's Answers to Master Withers*. Of this book, which obtained great popularity, an 8th edition appeared in 1636. In Warton's *Companion to the Oxford Guide*, this song is improperly ascribed to Taylor, the Water-poet. Ritson, "to cut the matter short," has endeavoured to ascertain the year in which it was written. "The author," he says, "was admitted of Magdalen College, Oxford, in 1604, and having pursued his studies for three years, left the University for the Inns of Chancery. Now it will be evident that this song was written at College. If, therefore, we allow the first year for his falling in love, the second, for the favourable return he experienced, and the third, for the loss of his mistress, this song must have been written in 1606, when the author was eighteen years of age."

I am sorry to be obliged to demolish a fabric so ingeniously constructed, but we shall presently find Wither in London in his eighteenth year, long after he had left Oxford. So much for Ritson's plan of cutting a matter short. By treading implicitly in the foot-prints of Wood, Ritson has fallen into another error, in saying that John Taylor was, on all occasions, the professed antagonist of Wither. The Water-poet, on the contrary, was the respectful admirer of Wither during the brighter period of his life, and only ceased to be so when Wither forsook the principles and the creed of his earlier days.

of whom Dr. Bliss has remarked, with great truth, that he rarely affirms any thing without sufficient reason. That the song was written at College, is proved by the allusions to the academical costume, and the summer excursions to Medley, "a large house between Godstow and Oxford, very pleasantly situated just by the river," and rendered still more attractive to the poetic mind by the visits of the fair and unfortunate Rosamond. This house has long been removed.

Anthony Wood insinuates that our poet acquired a little learning at the University, "with much ado."

Wither, who rarely concealed either his errors or his virtues, afterwards confessed, that upon his arrival at "the English Athens," he "fell to wondering at each thing he saw," and passed a month in noting the palaces, temples, cloisters, walks, and groves. The "Bell of Osney," and "old Sir Harry Bath," and the forest of Shotover were not forgotten. In the midst of those agreeable occupations, he never "drank at Aristotle's well." But at length he says, the kind affection of his tutor,

From childish humours gently called me in,
And with his grave instructions did begin
To teach; and by his good persuasion sought
To bring me to a love of what he taught.

Warner neither encouraged idleness in himself, nor permitted it in others.

The young poet found it easier to "practise at the tennis-ball" than to comprehend the mysteries of logic; his understanding was confused by the rules of "old Scotus, Seton, and new Keckerman." This state of stupor continued a considerable time, and it was not until Cynthia "had six times lost her borrowed light," that being ashamed to find himself outstripped by every

little ignorant “dandiprat,” he devoted his mind in earnest to master the difficulty. A little determination will accomplish great things. Wither soon felt his “dull intelligence” begin to open, and was astonished to discover that he

————— perceived more
In half an hour, than half a year before.

These pleasing occupations were soon to be interrupted.

He had been at Oxford about two years, and was beginning to love a College-life, when he was suddenly removed by his friends, and taken home “to hold the plough.” He alludes to this unwelcome change in *Abuses Whipt and Stript*, where he speaks of returning in discontent to “the beechy shadows of Bentworth*.” But Wither held the plough with no willing hand, and much of his time seems to have been occupied in wandering about the pleasant country around Alton, whose neighbourhood has been invested with a peculiar interest by the reputed partiality of Spenser, who, in this “delicate sweet air” is said to have “enjoyed his Muse and writ good part of his verses†.” In the sequestered grassy lanes of Bentworth, the young poet might dream away the summer-hours in the serenest meditations. But Wither’s sojourn at home was embittered by the officious interference of friends, who continually urged his relations to apprentice him to “some mechanick trade.” To

* But now ensues the worst—I setting foot
And thus digesting learning’s bitter root,
Ready to taste the fruit; then when I thought
I should a calling in that place have sought,
I found that I, for other ends ordain’d,
Was from that course perforce to be constrain’d.

Abuses Whipt and Stript, p. 5.

† According to Aubrey, who received the information from his friend, Mr. Samuel Woodford, who lived near Alton.

escape from these new-found crocodiles, as he calls them, he came to London, resolved to try his fortune at Court. Wither was now only eighteen years old, a fact I have ascertained from the 22nd emblem of the 1st book, in which he says—

My hopeful friends, at thrice five years and three,
Without a guide (into the world alone)
To seek my fortune did adventure me.
And many hazards I alighted on—

The emblem, of which these verses form a partial illustration, represents the choice of Hercules, and tells the story with considerable force. In the middle of the picture stands the bold ardent youth; on the right hand is seated Wisdom, with flowing beard and open book; and on the left is Vice, with one hand lifting the “painted vizard” from her face, so as to give a glimpse of the deformity of her features, and by her side lie a skull and cross-bones, the insignia of Death.

Soon after his arrival in the metropolis, Wither entered himself of Lincoln’s Inn, and appears to have formed an early intimacy with William Browne, the pastoral poet, who belonged to the Inner Temple. But his geny, says Anthony Wood, hanging after things more smooth and delightful, he did at length make himself known to the world (after he had taken several rambles therein) by certain specimens of poetry, which being dispersed in several hands, he became shortly after a public author. Of these several rambles we have no account, but it is probable that the young poet visited Ireland and Scotland; for in the list of his works we find, *Iter Hibernicum, or, an Irish Voyage**, and *Iter Boreale, or, a*

* In Wither’s Catalogue of his books is *A Discourse concerning the Plantations of Ulster, in Ireland*. Prose. Wood says this was printed, but it has not reached us.

Northern Journey. The MSS. of these poems were lost, we are told by Wither, when his house was plundered, or by some other accident, and Wood was in error, therefore, in saying that they had been recovered, and “printed more than once.”

Among Wither's lost works is a prose tract, entitled, “*Pursuit of Happiness*, being a character of the author's extravagances and passions in his youth.” This would be a treasure to the poet's biographer.”

The untimely death of Prince Henry, in 1612, was the theme of universal grief and lamentation. “The world here,” wrote Chamberlain to Sir Dudley Carleton, “is much dismayed at the loss of so hopeful and likely a prince all of a sudden.” Poetic garlands, without number, were showered upon his hearse. Bishop Hall lamented the “unseasonable death of his sweet master, Prince Henrie;” and Drayton, W. Browne, Chapman, Donne, Sylvester, Heywood, Webster, Drummond of Hawthornden, Wither, and many more, added their tribute to the general elegy. The offering of Wither was one of the most interesting, both in tone and expression, and breathes an affectionate sincerity, rarely found in poems of this description. When Prince Henry, during the King's visit to Oxford, in 1605, “sat in the midst of the upper table,” in the Hall of Magdalen College, Wither, then an undergraduate, formed one of the throng ranged along the sides.

The 32nd elegy offers a favourable specimen. The body of the Prince, it should be remembered, was embalmed, and carried in the funeral procession:—

Then as he past along you might espy
How the grieved vulgar, that shed many a tear,
Cast after an unwilling parting eye,

As loth to lose the sight they held so dear.
 When they had lost the figure of his face,
 Then they beheld his robes, his chariot then,
 Which being hid, their look aim'd at the place,
 Still longing to behold him once again;
 But when he was quite past, and they could find
 No object to employ their sight upon,
 Sorrow became more busy with the mind,
 And drew an army of sad passions on,
 Which made them so particularly moan,
 Each among thousands seemed as if alone.

The grandeur of the last line has been often imitated. All the elegies, however, are not equally excellent. The 34th begins, *Black was Whitehall*,—a noble specimen of the bathos*.

In the following year, Wither's Muse awoke a livelier measure, to celebrate the union of the Princess Elizabeth with the Count Palatine of the Rhine. Mr. Dalrymple says, that no edition of the *Epithalamia* is mentioned earlier than 1622; but he might have found them in *The Works of Master George Wither*, published by Thomas Walkley, in 1620. According to Dr. Bliss, they were first printed in 4to., in 1613. At the commencement of the poems, Wither describes himself to have been "lately grieved more than can be expressed," and determining to "shut up his Muse in dark obscurity," he

———— In content, the better to repose,
 A lonely grove upon a mountain chose,
 East from Caer-winn, midway 'twixt Arle and Dis,
 True springs where Britain's true Arcadia is.

But before he departed, the winter which, in a marginal note we are informed, was exceedingly tempestuous, had

* When the women in Scotland, says an anonymous writer, quoted in Nichols's *Progresses of Queen Elizabeth*, v. iii., p. 353, do lament the death of their dearest children, to comfort them it is ordinarily said, and is passed into a proverb, *Did not good Prince Henry die?*

set in. His Muse ingeniously accounts to him for the recent floods, by the gathering together of the tributary streams of the Thames to honour the approaching "match betwixt great Thame and Rhine." For this hyperbole Wither might have pleaded the example of Bishop Hall, who had traced the unseasonable winter to the death of Prince Henry*. Our poet returned to London in the beginning of spring:—

My lonely life I suddenly forsook,
And to the Court again my journey took.

* * * * *

The winter 'gan to change in every thing,
And seemed to borrow mildness of the spring,
The violet and primrose fresh did grow,
And, as in April, trimm'd both copse and row†.

Wither composed the *Epithalamia* with a twofold object: to honour the Princess, and to convince the public that he "had as well an affable look to encourage honesty, as a stern frown to cast on villany. If the times would suffer me," he adds, "I could be as pleasing others, and, perhaps, ere long I will make you amends for my former rigour." The song of congratulation was worthy of himself and of the occasion; and the manner in which he recommends his rustic melody is very graceful and tender:—

But if amongst Apollo's lays you can
Be pleased to lend a gentle ear to Pan,
Or think your country shepherd loves as dear
As if he were a courtier or a peer;

* The winter weeps and mourns indeed.—*Lacrymæ Lacrymarum*.

† Wither was in no favour at Court:—

I myself, though meanest stated,
And in Court now almost hated,
Will knit up my scourge, and venture
In the midst of them to enter.—*Epithalamia*.

Then I, that else must to my cell of pain,
Will joyful turn unto my flock again.

The sound of Pan's shepherd-reed was in some danger of being drowned in the general rejoicing and pomp of these sumptuous nuptials; upon the celebration of which, according to Rapin, the enormous sum of 93,278*l.* was expended. Neither should the Water-poet's song be forgotten; In the description of the "sea-fights" and fire-works upon the Thames, Taylor was quite at home.

It has been supposed, upon the authority of a passage in the *Warning Piece to London*, that the first edition of *Abuses Whipt and Stript* appeared in 1611; but I am inclined to think that the expression of Wither—

In sixteen hundred ten and one,
I notice took of public crimes,

refers to an earlier publication, from the ill-consequences of which he was extricated by the kind intervention of the young Princess Elizabeth. And this opinion seems to be strengthened by the dedication of his version of the Psalms, in 1632, to that unfortunate lady. "Among those who are in affection of your Majesty's loyal servants I am one; and in my own country great multitudes have took notice of a special *obligation* which I had, above many others, to honour and serve you. For I do hereby most humbly and thankfully acknowledge, that when my over-forward Muse first fluttered out of her nest, she obtained the preservation of her endangered liberty by your gracious favour; and, perhaps, escaped also thereby that 'pinioninge' which would have marred her flying forth for ever after."

The Princess had early evinced her poetical skill in a poem addressed to her guardian, Lord Harington, and

may, therefore, be supposed to have interested herself with peculiar pleasure in the cause of an endangered poet. When Wither boasted, in the *Shepherd's Hunting*, that

The noblest Nymph of Thame

had graced his verse unto his "greater fame," he alluded to the same accomplished individual.

Satire, specifically so called, observes Warton in his *History of English Poetry*, did not commence in England till the latter end of the reign of Elizabeth. Eclogues and Allegories had hitherto been made the vehicles of satire, but the first professed English satirist was Bishop Hall, whose *Toothless Satires* were printed in 1597. Warton, in this instance, is not implicitly to be followed. Chaucer and Skelton, in particular, had long before furnished specimens of unconcealed and bitter satire; and Gascoigne's *Steele Glas*, expressly entitled a satire, was published in 1587, ten years before the first appearance of Hall's poems. The eloquent Bishop, indeed, considered himself the first adventurer in this path of poetry*, but Mr. Beloe, in the *Anecdotes of Literature*, and Mr. Collier, in the *Poetical Decameron*†, have both ingeniously attempted, and with apparent success, to establish the prior claims of Thomas Lodge and Dr. Donne. But if Hall was second in point of time, he was first in merit. So much elegance of thought, en-

* I first adventure, follow me who list,
And be the second English satyryst.—*Prolog. to Sat.*

† *Poetical Decameron*, vol. i., p. 155. Mr. Collier founds the claim of Donne to this honour upon the authority of a MS. copy of his *Satires* among the Harl. MSS., No. 5110, and bearing date 1593, and endeavours to show that a limited number of copies for private circulation were very early printed. Upon every subject connected with the history of our poetry, Mr. Collier is to be listened to with the respect due to his inquiring industry and acuteness of judgment.

forced by such vigour of delineation, and felicity of style, had not been often seen in our poetry.

Hall was followed by Marston, with his "rough-hew'd rhymes," his bitter personalities, his life-like sketches, and the choice pictorial epithets that won the youthful ear of Milton. Both attacked the vices and follies of the times—Hall, with the scholastic severity of one acquainted with vice only by contemplating its effects in others; and Marston, with a vigour and warmth of colouring betokening a familiarity with the scenes he described. His invectives against crime are frequently only incentives to its commission, unintentionally, we are told, on the author's part, and yet not less dangerous on that account. Warton has excellently remarked, that when Vice is led forth to be sacrificed at the shrine of Virtue, the victim should not be too richly drest. Marston, unfortunately, often bound the garland upon her head. Compared with Bishop Hall, his rhythm is more copious and disengaged, and, although not so carefully modulated, flows with a more sustained energy and power.

The popularity of Hall and Marston gave rise to an "innumerable crop" of Satirists. The dedication of *Abuses Whipt and Stript* to himself, was probably suggested to Wither by Marston, who had inscribed the *Scourge of Villainie* to "his most esteemed and beloved self;" and the idea of the title might have been borrowed from the same writer*.

Wither wrote his Satire under the excitement of dis-

* Marston, in the *Scourge of Villainie*, says, "I'll strip you nak't and whip you with my rimes;" and Mr. Park has pointed out a puritanical pamphlet published in 1569, called, *The Children of the Chapel Stript and Whipt*. This seems to have been a favourite phrase.—See also Warton's *Hist. of Poet.*, vol. iii. p. 288.

appointed expectations. In the dedication, he alludes to the imagination of some preferment, and confesses, that being unable to procure any employment, he had applied himself to watching the vices of the times.

He refers, mysteriously, to the destruction of his prospects, in the *Shepherd's Hunting*, where, after detailing, in an allegory, the ravages made by the wild beasts of the Metropolis among the flocks of innocent shepherds, he says,

Yea, I among the rest did fare as bad,
Or rather worse, for the best ewes* I had,
Whose breed should be my means of hope and gain,
Were in one evening by these monsters slain,
Which mischief I resolved to repay,
Or else grow desperate, and hunt all away.
For in a fury (such as you shall see
Huntsmen in missing of their sport will be)
I vow'd a monster should not lurk about,
In all this province but I'd find him out.
And thereupon, without respect or care,
How, lame, how full, or how unfit they were,
In haste unkennell'd all my roaring crew,
Who were as mad as if my mind they knew.

This roaring crew consisted of his *Satyrs*, which Wither followed in full cry through

Hamlets, tithings, parishes, and boroughs,
Through kitchen, parlour, hall and chamber too—
And as they pass'd the City, and the Court,
My Prince look'd out and deign'd to view the sport.

Far, however, from lamenting his ill-success, Wither rejoiced that God, "by dashing his hopes," had called him to himself again. Considered as the work of a young man, who came to the task with no preparation

* Meaning his *hopes*.

of books or study, *Abuses Whipt and Stript* merits our approbation*. In the Address to the Reader, we are cautioned not to look “for Spenser’s or Daniel’s well-composed numbers, or the deep conceits of now flourishing Jonson.” He purposely avoided speaking in “dark parables,” and rejected as useless, all “poetical additions and feigned allegories.”

Warton says that Wither’s poem is characterized by a vein of severity unseasoned by wit; but I have yet to learn that wit, in the common acceptation of the word, is necessary to the formation of a satirist. We find little of it in Juvenal, and still less in Dr. Johnson’s noble imitation of his manner. The vices and crimes of men are not to be cured or restrained by laughing at them. The light arrows of mirthful irony and humour make no impression on their coat of steel; it is only by the “mailed and resolved hand” of virtuous indignation that their coverings can be rent away, and their natural deformity and loathsomeness exposed. If Wither had not the hand to do this, he had at least the desire, and he came up to Milton’s idea of the duties of a satirist, by striking high, and adventuring dangerously “at the most eminent vices among the greatest persons;” and he afforded an example, in his own person, that if a satire was not always “born out of a Tragedy,” it frequently terminated in one†.

Appended to the Satire are several epigrams addressed to various individuals, and among others to Lord Ridgeway, whom Wither commemorates as the first that “graced and gratified his Muse.” Henry, Earl of

* When he this book composed, it was more
Than he had read in twice twelve months before.

Introduct. to Abuses, &c.

† Apology for Smectymnus.

Southampton*, the patron of Shakspeare, and one of the founders of Virginia; William, Earl of Pembroke, of whose almost universal generosity to poets I shall have another opportunity of speaking; and Lady Mary Wroth, the niece of Sir Philip Sydney, and the authoress of a long and tedious romance, in imitation of the *Arcadia*, entitled *Urania*†.

At the end of *Abuses*, &c., is a poem called the *Scourge*, in which Wither appears to have gratified his malignity at the expense of his honesty. Wood, who had never seen the *Scourge*, speaks of it as a separate publication, but it forms a postscript to the edition of *Abuses Whipt and Stript*, in 1615, and from the terms in which the Author refers to it, may be supposed to have occupied the same place in the earlier edition. The following attack upon an upright and honourable man cannot be justified.

And prithee tell the B. Chancellor,
That thou art sent to be his counsellor,
And tell him if he mean not to be stript,
And like a school-boy once again be whipt,
His worship would not so bad minded be,
As to pervert judgment for a scurvy fee.

The individual here alluded to must have been Lord Ellesmere, a man whose excellence of heart and purity of mind obtained the suffrages of his contemporaries.

* Braithwaite, in the *Scholar's Medley*, calls him "learning's best favourite."

† Shenstone was thankful that his name presented no facilities to the punster. Lady Wroth could not boast of the same immunity. In her case, however, the ingenuity of flattery alone was evinced. Davies, of Hereford, in his *Twenty-nine Epigrams*, addressed to contemporary poets, has one inscribed to the "all-worthily commended Lady Mary Wroth," whose name, he says, in the abstract, is not *Wroth*, but *Worth*. Ben Jonson inscribed two of his Epigrams, and a Sonnet in the *Underwoods* to this Lady, and he also dedicated to her his exquisite comedy of the *Alchemist*.

He died in 1616, and James received the seals with his own hand from the expiring Chancellor. Hacket says of him, in the *Life of Archbishop Williams*, that he never did, spoke, or thought any thing undeserving of praise. It is a singular fact, that Lord Bacon and Bishop Williams, who both partook of his generous patronage, should have succeeded him in his high office. The poet Donne, who, on his return from Spain, had become Secretary to Lord Ellesmere, was deprived of the benefit of the connexion by his secret marriage with the daughter of Sir George More*.

The Satire produced, it is to be feared, no salutary effects upon the public morals, but it sent the imprudent author to the Marshalsea prison†. Of the sufferings he endured there, Wither has left an affecting account in the *Scholler's Purgatory*. "All my apparent good intentions," he says, "were so mistaken by the aggravation of some ill affected towards my endeavours, that I was shut up from the society of mankind, and, as one unworthy the compassion vouchsafed to thieves and murderers, was neither permitted the use of my pen, the access or sight of acquaintance, the allowances usually afforded other close prisoners, nor means to send for necessaries befitting my present condition: by which means I was for many days compelled to feed on nothing but the coarsest bread, and sometimes locked up four-

* Ben Jonson, who, as Mr. Gifford has observed, knew Lord Ellesmere, and judged him well, has in more than one place, recorded his worth; he describes him, in the *Discoveries*, as "a grave and great orator, best when he was provoked;" and he also eulogized the purity of the Chancellor's judgments in one of the most beautiful of his epigrams, and in the *Underwoods*, made him the theme of his praise. Taylor says, in the *Aqua-Musæ*, 1644, p. 7, of Wither,

"Tis known that once, within these thirty years,

Thou wert in jail for slandering some peers.

One of these must have been Ellesmere.

† Not, as Aubrey believed, to Newgate.

and-twenty hours together, without so much as a drop of water to cool my tongue: and being at the same time in one of the greatest extremities of sickness that was ever inflicted upon my body, the help both of physician and apothecary was uncivilly denied me. So that if God had not, by resolutions of the mind which he infused into me, extraordinarily enabled me to wrestle with those and such other afflictions as I was then exercised with all, I had been dangerously and lastingly overcome. But of these usages," he adds, "I complain not; He that made me, made me strong enough to despise them."

Wither's account of his sufferings may have been somewhat exaggerated; for Taylor, the Water-poet, who knew him well, informs us that multitudes of people came to him "in pilgrimage during his imprisonment," and provided him with every necessary. But though multitudes might have made a pilgrimage to the Marshalsea, it does not follow that either they or the provisions were admitted to the prisoner. Indeed the banishment of his friends, and the "exclusion from the Sacred Rites," were the constant subjects of the poet's lamentation.

It was not in the heart of Wither to be idle, or to yield to the depressing influence of his fortune; he seemed to experience, in its truest meaning, the sentiment afterwards expressed by the accomplished Lovelace, when confined in the Gatehouse at Westminster;

Stone walls do not a prison make,
Nor iron bars a cage;
Minds innocent and quiet, take
That for a hermitage.

During his imprisonment he composed the *Shepherd's*

Hunting, a pastoral poem of great beauty, and containing one passage in particular, the celebrated address to poesy, which will not be forgotten while the love of poetry shall endure amongst us. It is dedicated to those "virtuous friends" who visited him in the Marshalsea, and professes to be a small return for their many acts of kindness. The poem, he informs us, was no part of his study, but merely a recreation during his solitary hours, neither in his "conceit fitting, nor by him intended to be made common." Some of his friends, however, copied the MS. in his absence, and prepared it for the press before his return. Wither, who seems to have entertained a very unaccountable objection to the publication of the poem, was no longer able to resist the importunity of his friends. The inappropriate title of *The Shepherd's Hunting*, was given to the work by the stationer.

The following extract from *A Prisoner's Lay*, is a very beautiful and ingenious adaptation of Scripture to his own peculiar case*. It was, indeed, good for him to suffer, if he could thus gather consolation in the midst of sorrow, and, untroubled by the noises of the world without, surrender up his mind to holy meditations:—

First think, my soul, if I have foes
That take a pleasure in my care,

* Wither sweetly alludes to the origin of this hymn :

He that first taught his music such a strain,
Was that sweet shepherd, who, until a king,
Kept sheep upon the honey-milky plain
That is enricht by Joidan's watering :
He in his troubles eased the body's pains,
By measures rais'd to the soul's ravishing :
And his sweet numbers only most divine,
Gave the first being to this song of mine.

Shepherd's Hunting, eclogue i.

And to procure these outward woes
Have thus enwrap me unaware ;
Thou should'st by much more careful be,
Since greater foes lay wait for thee.

By my late hopes that now are crost,
Consider those that firmer be,
And make the freedom I have lost
A means that may remember thee.
Had Christ not thy Redeemer been,
What horrid state had'st thou been in !

Or when through me thou seest a man
Condemn'd unto a mortal death,
How sad he looks, how pale, how wan,
Drawing, with fear, his panting breath :
Think if in that such grief thou see,
How sad will "Go ye cursed" be !

These iron chains, these bolts of steel,
Which often poor offenders grind ;
The wants and cares which they do feel
May bring some greater things to mind.
For by their grief thou shalt do well
To think upon the pains of Hell.

Again, when he that feared to die
(Past hope) doth see his pardon brought,
Read but the joy that's in his eye,
And then convey it to thy thought :
Then think between thy heart and thee,
How glad will "Come ye blessed" be !

The *Shepherd's Hunting* is divided into five eclogues ; the fourth is dedicated to "his truly beloved, loving friend, Mr. William Browne," and forms the most poetical part of the composition. It is written in that playful lyric measure, in which no writer, not even Milton in his *L'Allegro*, has surpassed Wither. He said truly, in "Fair Virtue," that the measure "liketh" him. The hepta-

syllabic metre had been already rendered popular by Fletcher in his *Faithful Shepherdess*. The precise period when this exquisite pastoral tragi-comedy, as it is styled by the author, was composed, is not precisely known; but that it was produced and acted before 1611 is evident, from the circumstance of its being praised by Davies in his *Scourge of Folly*, published in that year. It was most likely printed soon after its first representation, which was very unfavourably received. Ben Jonson called it "a murdered poem," and insinuates that its ill success was attributable to its purity and support of virtue. Italian pastoral poetry had been for some time cultivated in this country. The *Amyntas* of Tasso, and the *Pastor Fido* of Guarini, appeared in 1592 and 1602; the first translated by Fraunce, and the second by Dymock*. To return to Wither: not often has one poet addressed another in a sweeter strain than the following:—

Go, my Willy, get thee gone,
Leave me in exile alone.
Hie thee to that merry throng
And amaze them with thy song.
Thou art young, yet such a lay
Never graced the month of May,
As (if they provoke thy skill)
Thou canst fit unto the quill.
I, with wonder, heard thee sing
At our last year's revelling:
Then I with the rest was free,
When unknown I noted thee,
And perceived the ruder swains
Envy thy far sweeter strains.
Yea, I saw the lasses cling
Round about thee in a ring;

* The *Works of Beaumont and Fletcher*, by Henry Weber, Esq., 14 vols., 1812, v. 4.

As if each one jealous were
Any but herself should hear.

Browne did not forsake his friend in the hour of adversity, and Wither gratefully acknowledged that in listening to his cheerful music, he "forgot his wrong."

Of Browne's history little is known. He was educated at Exeter College, Oxford, and subsequently belonged to the Inner Temple. We are told by Wood, that he had a little body and a great mind. The first part of *Britannia's Pastorals* was published in 1613, when the author was only twenty-three years old, and the second part in 1616. He was the beloved of Drayton and Ben Jonson, and the "severer muse" of Selden commended his "tuned essays." In 1624 he returned to Exeter College in the capacity of tutor to Robert Dormer, afterwards Earl of Caernarvon, who perished in the battle of Newbury. Of the later years of his life no account has been preserved. He appears to have resided in the family of Lord Pembroke, and to have obtained more wealth than usually falls to the lot of poets. But the Earl's Palace was a "Castle of Indolence" to Browne, and his agricultural employments also contributed to withdraw him from the service of the Muse. At any rate, his manhood never realized the promise of his youth. Browne is not popular, and never will be; yet we may say of him, in his own words, that he was

A gentle shepherd, born in Arcady,
That well could tune his pipe, and deftly* play
The nymphs asleep with rural minstrelsy.

The song of the bird among the dewy grass, or the faint shadow of a flower upon the water, were inspirations to him. His genius was not of the highest order,

* Deftly—neatly, dexterously.

but it was pure and gentle; and some of his smaller lyric poems are marked by a Grecian delicacy and finish. One specimen from his *Original Poems*, first published by Sir Egerton Brydges* will not be unacceptable:—

Yet one day's rest for all my cries,
 One hour among so many;
 Springs have their Sabbaths, my poor eyes
 Yet never met with any.
 He that doth but one woe miss,
 O Death! to make him thine—
 I would to God that I had his,
 Or else that he had mine.

To poems like this, we may apply Dryden's remark, in the dedication of the *Æneid*, that the sweetest essences are always confined in the smallest glasses†. *The Happy Life*, in the same collection, is not less beautiful.

The following are the exquisite lines upon poetry already referred to; they have been frequently reprinted, but it would be unjust to Wither to omit them in this place:—

And though for her sake I am crost,
 Though my best hopes I have lost,
 And knew she would make my trouble
 Ten times more than ten times double;
 I would love and keep her too,
 Spite of all the world could do—

* From a MS. volume among the Lansdowne MSS. in the British Museum.

† While residing at Oxford with his pupil, Browne received the degree of Master of Arts, with this honourable notice in the *Public Register*:—
Vir omni humanâ literatura et bonarum artium cognitione instructus.

Browne has expressed his high opinion of Wither's poetry in *Britannia's Pastorals*, although the value of the praise is not increased by the inclusion of that dull writer, Davies:—

Davies and Wither, by whose Muses' power,
 A natural day to me seems but an hour,
 And could I ever hear their learned lays,
 Ages would turn to artificial days.

Brit. Past., b. 2, song 2.

For though banisht from my flocks,
And confin'd within these rocks,
Here I waste away the light,
And consume the sullen night,
She doth for my comfort stay,
And keeps many cares away.
Though I miss the flow'ry fields,
With those sweets the spring-tide yields,
Though I may not see those groves,
Where the shepherds chaunt their loves,
And the lasses more excell
Than the sweet-voiced Philomel.
Though of all these pleasures past,
Nothing now remains at last
But Remembrance (poor relief),
That makes more than mends my grief;
She's my mind's companion still,
Maugre * Envy's evil will;
She doth tell me where to borrow
Comfort in the midst of sorrow;
Makes the desolatest place
To her presence be a grace,
And the blackest discontents
Be her fairest ornaments.
In my former days of bliss,
Her divine skill taught me this,
That from every thing I saw
I could some invention draw,
And raise pleasure to her height
By the meanest objects sight.
By the murmur of a spring,
Or the least bough's rustleling (rusteling),
Or a daisy whose leaves spread,
Shut when Titan goes to bed,
Or a shady bush or tree,
She could more infuse in me,

* *Maugre*, in spite of; *Malgré*, French.—Nares's *Glossary*.

Than all nature's beauties can,
In some other wiser man ;
By her help I also now,
Make this churlish place allow
Some things that may sweeten gladness
In the very gall of sadness.
The dull lowness, the black shade,
That these hanging vaults have made,
The strange music of the waves
Beating on these hollow caves ;
This black den which rocks emboss,
Overgrown with eldest moss—
The rude portals that give light
More to Terror than Delight.
This my chamber of Neglect,
Walled about with Disrespect,—
From all these, and this dull air,
A fit object for Dispair,
She hath taught me by her might,
To draw comfort and delight ;
Therefore, thou best earthly bliss,
I will cherish thee for this.
Poesie, thou sweet'st content,
That e're Heaven to mortals lent,
Though they as a trifle leave thee,
Whose dull thoughts cannot conceive thee ;
Thou then be to them a scorn,
That to nought but earth are born—
Let my life no longer be,
Than I am in love with thee.

The precise period of Wither's imprisonment has not been ascertained ; but he was evidently in the Marshalsea during the earlier spring and summer months ; for Alexis, in the third eclogue, condoles with him for the loss of his liberty during the pleasant season :—

When every bushy vale
And grove and hill rings with the nightingale.

His confinement is said by Wood to have increased his poetical reputation, especially among the puritanical party, who cried him up the more “for his profuse pouring forth of English rhyme.” Upon this “long-eared crew,” the exquisite melody of the *Shepherd's Hunting* must have been entirely lost.

The fifth eclogue is dedicated to Master W. F., of the Middle Temple, a friend whom Wither seems to have met at the rooms of Browne. W. F., who, in the *Shepherd's Hunting*, is represented under the name of Alexis, was unremitting in his attentions to the poet during his abode in the Marshalsea; and in the third eclogue his visits are gratefully remembered:—

Alexis, you are welcome, for you know
 You cannot be but welcome where I am;
 You ever were a friend of mine in shew,
 And I have found you are, indeed, the same.
 Upon my first restraint you hither came,
 And proffered me more tokens of your love
 Than it were fit my small deserts should prove.

Wither did not quietly endure his incarceration. In 1614, he addressed a satire to the King, written with great vigour and freedom. The following indignant lines have all the boldness and strength of Dryden's happiest efforts:—

Do I not know a great man's power and might,
 In spite of innocence can smother right,
 Colour his villainies to get esteem,
 And make the honest man the villain seem.
 I know it, and the world doth know 'tis true,
 Yet I protest if such a man I knew,
 That might my country prejudice, or thee,
 Were he the greatest or the proudest he,
 That breathes this day; if so it might be found
 That any good to either might redound,

I, unappalled, dare in such a case
 Rip up his foulest crimes before his face,
 Though for my labour I were sure to drop
 Into the mouth of ruin without hope.

He grieves only that he had been hitherto "so sparing"
 of his censure—

I'de have my pen so paint it where it traces,
 Each accent should draw blood into their faces,
 And make them, when their villainies are blazed,
 Shudder and startle as men half-amazed,
 For fear my verse should make so loud a din,
 Heaven hearing might rain vengeance on our sin.

The last line is an example of a Scriptural truth, most felicitously and appropriately applied. This satire bears a close resemblance in several expressions, and in its general tone, to passages in Ben Jonson's *Every Man in his Humour*, of which a surreptitious edition appeared in 1603.

The most accomplished courtier of the Augustan age could not have exceeded the graceful elegance of the following lines to James :—

While here my Muse in discontent doth sing
 To thee, her great Apollo, and my king ;
 Imploring thee by that high, sacred name,
 By justice, and those powers that I could name :
 By whatsoe'er may move, entreat I thee,
 To be what thou art unto all, to me.

Wither's liberation from prison has been generally attributed to the influence of this satire ; but Mr. Collier very properly observes, that he could never learn on what authority the assertion rested. Certainly not on the authority of Wither himself ; and it is scarcely reasonable to suppose that a poem of so much severity should have obtained a remission of the punishment

awarded to a milder and even less obnoxious composition. I am induced, by a passage in the fourth book of the *Emblems*, to ascribe his release to the friendly interposition of the Earl of Pembroke, who he tells the successor to the title (Philip), when the King, "by others misinformed," took offence at "his free lines,"

———— found such means and place,
To bring and reconcile me to his grace,
That therewith-all his majesty bestow'd
A gift upon me which his bounty show'd,
And had enrich'd me, if what was intended*,
Had not by othersome been ill befriended,—

And in the *Scholler's Purgatory* he stated, many years earlier, that as soon as he had an opportunity to justify his honest intentions, and to give reasons for his questionable expressions, he was restored to the common liberty, as he persuaded himself, with *the good favour of the King and of all those that restrained him*†.

The gift bestowed upon him by the king, was the patent for his *Hymns and Songs of the Church*. The origin of this privilege Wither has explained. "For

* Yet I confess the following passage, from *Salt upon Salt*, does not countenance this belief:—

Thou hast, moreover, from the menacing
And dreadful wrath of an incensed king,
Delivered me without a mediator,
Or back receding in the smallest letter,
From truths averr'd.

It is impossible to reconcile the conflicting statements respecting Wither's liberation. Taylor, in the *Aqua Musæ*, asserted that he was released against his will, and that when they subsequently met, after having "used complimentary courtesy," Wither advised him, in order to improve his fortune, to write satires and get imprisoned as he had done. It is not likely that the Water-poet had any grounds for this declaration. A man who came out of jail a beggar, could hardly be said to have improved his condition.

† It would appear that Wither's imprisonment originated with the Privy Council, for he expresses his belief that his sufferings were unknown to "that honourable Council which committed him."

before I had license to come abroad again into the world, I was forced to pay expenses so far beyond my ability, that ere I could be clearly discharged, I was left many pounds worse than nothing, and, to enjoy the name of liberty, was cast into a greater bondage than before. Wherefore, coming abroad again into the world, accompanied thither with those affections which are natural to most men, I was loth (if it might conveniently be prevented) either to sink below my rank, or to live at the mercy of a creditor. And, therefore, having none of those helps, or trades, or shifts, which many others have to relieve themselves withal, I humbly petitioned the king's most excellent Majesty, (not to be supplied at his, or by any projectment to the oppression of his people,) but that, according to the laws of nature, I might enjoy the benefit of my own labours, by virtue of his royal privilege. His Majesty vouchsafed my reasonable request with addition of voluntary favour, beyond my own desire*."

The publication of the *Hymns and Songs of the Church* did not take place until some years after.

He had also a share in the *Shepherd's Pipe*, which forms a meet companion to the *Shepherd's Hunting*.

* The king's patent bears date the 17th day of February, 1622-3. "James, by the grace of God. To all and singular printers, booksellers. Whereas our well-beloved subject, George Withers, gentleman, by his great industrie and diligent studie hath gathered and composed a book, entituled *Hymnes and Songes of the Church*, by him faithfullie and brieflie translated into lirick verse, which said booke being esteemed worthie and profitable to be incerted in convenient manner and due place into everie English Psalme-book in meeter. We give and grant full and free licence, power, and privilege unto the said George Withers, his executors and assigns, onelie to imprint, or cause to be imprinted, for the term of fifty and one years, &c. Witness ourself at Westminster the 17th day of February, reg. 20, 1622-3."—Rymer's *Fœdera*, v. xvii. 454, where the patent is printed at length. It also states that the privilege was given for Withers's further "encouragement in such his endeavours."

This beautiful poem, printed in 1614, has always been assigned to Browne; but it is attributed to Wither in the edition of his works published in 1620, and we have his own testimony in the *Fides Anglicana*, that it was "composed jointly by him and Mr. William Browne." Roget is clearly intended to represent Wither, and Willie, Browne. Warton alludes to the *Shepherd's Pipe*, and ascribes to Browne the publication of Occleve's version of the Story of King Darius's Legacy to his Three Sons, in the *Gesta Romanorum*. The poem is contributed by Roget, already pointed out as the pastoral name of Wither, and in a note at the end of the first eclogue it is said, "as this shall please, I may be drawn to publish the rest of his works, being all perfect in my hands." Occleve has been called the disciple of Chaucer, and it will presently be seen, from the assistance furnished to the Rev. William Bedwell, in his antiquarian pursuits, by Wither, that he was considered "a man of exquisite judgment in that kind of learning." We may be justified, therefore, in awarding to him the merit of the publication of this old poem.

The *Shepherd's Pipe* opens with Willie's consolation of his friend Roget.

Roget, droop not, see the spring
Is the earth enameling,
And the birds on every tree
Greet this morn with melody :
Hark how yonder thrustle chaunts it,
And her mate as proudly vaunts it.
See how every stream is drest
By her margin, with the best
Of Flora's gifts, she seems glad
For such brooks such flowers she had.
All the trees are quaintly tired
With green buds of all desired ;

And the hawthorn every day
 Spreads some little show of May.
 See the primrose sweetly set
 By the much-loved violet,
 All the banks so sweetly cover.

* * * *

Yet in all this merry tide,
 When all cares are laid aside,
 Roget sits as if his blood
 Had not felt the quickning good
 Of the sun, nor cares to play
 Or with songs to pass the day
 As he wont. Fye, Roget, fye,
 Raise thy head, and merrily
 Tune us somewhat to thy reed.
 See our flocks do freely feed.
 Here we may together sit,
 And for music very fit
 Is this place; from yonder wood
 Comes an echo shrill and good.
 Twice full perfectly it will,
 Answer to thine oaten quill.

ROGET.

Ah, Willie, Willie, why should I
 Sound my notes of jollity?
 Since no sooner can I play
 Any pleasing roundelay,
 But some one or other still
 'Gins to descant on my quill,
 And will say, by this he me
 Meaneth in his minstrelsy.

Can any one doubt, after reading these lines, that the poem was partly written by Wither?

The verses in which Roget commends the story of Occleve are exceedingly fanciful and elegant; but Warton was correct in saying that the eulogy was undeserved.

'Tis a song not many swains
 Singen can, and though it be
 Not so deckt with nicety
 Of sweet words full sweetly chused,
 As are now by shepherds used ;
 Yet if well you sound the sense,
 And the moral's excellence,
 You shall find it quit the while,
 And excuse the homely style.
 Well I wot the man that first
 Sung this lay, did quench his thirst,
 Deeply as did ever one
 In the Muse's Helicon.
 Many times he hath been seen
 With the fairies on the green,
 And to them his pipe did sound,
 Whil'st they danced in a round.
 Mickle* solace would they make him,
 And at midnight often wake him,
 And convey him from his room,
 To a field of yellow broom ;
 Or into the meadows where
 Mints perfume the gentle air,
 And where Flora spends her treasure,
 There they would begin their measure.

The *Shepherd's Pipe* is dedicated by Browne to Lord Zouch, the friend of Sir Henry Wotton, and the poet dwells with evident pleasure upon the shades of the "delightful Bramshill." Lord Zouch is supposed to have been the occasional patron of Ben Jonson, who called him "good Lord Zouch." It was in the park of this magnificent seat that Archbishop Parker, while

* Mickle, *great*. In this sense it is used by Shakspeare.

O mickle is the powerful grace that lies
 In plants, herbs, stones, and their true qualities.

Rom. and Jul. ii. 3.—Nares's *Glossary*.

hunting, in the summer of 1612, accidentally struck with an arrow Peter Hawkins, one of the keepers.

After his liberation, with a view of recreating his mind during severer studies, Wither wrote his *Motto*.

Of this book he tells us, in the *Fragmenta Prophetica*, thirty thousand copies were disposed of within a few months. The author numbers it among the books composed when he was of maturer years. His object was to draw the "true picture" of his own heart, that his friends who "knew him outwardly might have some representation of his inside also." But he was at the same time actuated by a higher and better feeling, that of confirming himself in his own good resolutions, and of preventing "such alterations as time and infirmities" might tend to produce. The poem is, therefore, rather moral and didactic than satiric—the poet's "furies were tied in chains." At this period Wither was in comfortable circumstances. In the Inventory of his Wealth, he enumerates a friend, books and papers, which he calls his jewels, a servant, and a horse. The merits of the *Motto* will be sufficiently exemplified by one or two specimens. The following passage contains all the materials of poetry; it only requires the taste and finish of a patient architect*.

Yet I confess, in this my pilgrimage,
I, like some infant, am of tender age.
For as the child who from his father hath
Stray'd in some grove thro' many a crooked path;

* Not the least singular part of the *Motto* is the frontispiece. The author is represented sitting on a rock, with gardens, houses, woods and meadows, spread beneath him, to which he points with his finger, holding a riband, on which is written *nec habeo, nor have I*. At his feet is a globe of the earth, with the words *nec curo, nor care I*. The poet himself sits with eyes uplifted towards heaven, from which a ray of light descends, and from his lips proceed *nec careo, nor want I*.

Is sometimes hopeful that he finds the way,
And sometimes doubtful he runs more astray.
Sometime with fair and easy paths doth meet,
Sometime with rougher tracts that stay his feet ;
Here goes, there runs, and yon amazed stays ;
Then cries, and straight forgets his care, and plays.
Then hearing where his loving father calls,
Makes haste, but through a zeal ill-guided falls ;
Or runs some other way, until that he
(Whose love is more than his endeavours be)
To seek the wanderer, forth himself doth come,
And take him in his arms, and bear him home.
So in this life, this grove of ignorance,
As to my homeward, I myself advance,
Sometimes aright, and sometimes wrong I go,
Sometimes my pace is speedy, sometimes slow :
One while my ways are pleasant unto me,
Another while as full of cares they be.
I doubt and hope, and doubt and hope again,
And many a change of passion I sustain
In this my journey, so that now and then
I lost, perhaps, may seem to other men.
Yea, to myself awhile, when sins impure
Do my Redeemer's love from me obscure.
But whatsoe'er betide, I know full well,
My Father, who above the clouds doth dwell,
An eye upon his wandering child doth cast,
And he will fetch me to my home at last.

Passages like this, full of beautiful reliance upon the mercy and long suffering of our heavenly Father, abound in almost every page of the poet's compositions, casting a hallowing light over much that is unworthy both of the writer and the Christian.

The indignant attack upon the hired flatterers and elegists of the day deserves to be extracted. Wither preserved himself, in a great measure, unspotted from this " burning sin " of the age he lived in.

I have no Muses that will serve the turn,
At every triumph, and rejoice or mourn,
After a minute's warning, for their hire,
If with old sherry they themselves inspire.
I am not of a temper like to those
That can provide an hour's sad talk in prose
For any funeral, and then go dine,
And choke my grief with sugar-plums and wine.
I cannot at the claret sit and laugh,
And then, half tipsy, write an epitaph.
I cannot for reward adorn the hearse
Of some old rotten miser with my verse ;
Nor like the poetasters of the time,
Go howl a doleful elegy in rhyme
For every lord or ladyship that dies,
And then perplex their heirs to patronize
That muddy poesy. Oh, how I scorn
Those raptures which are free and nobly born,
Should, fidler-like, for entertainment scrape
At strangers' windows, and go play the ape
In counterfeiting passion.

An occasional resemblance has been pointed out between the style of Wither and Churchill ; but Wither was as inferior to that ill-judging writer in the general fertility and poignancy of his invective as he was superior in what alone can render satire effective, or even justifiable, the wish to benefit our fellow-men. Churchill's genius was only surpassed by his profligacy ; and while we acknowledge the justice of Cowper's eulogy upon his talents, we almost regret that it was ever bestowed. Tears are a more seemly offering than flowers upon the grave of impurity and vice !

Wood said of the notorious John Lilburne, that if he had been left alone in the world, " John would be against Lilburne, and Lilburne against John." Wither partook

of this quarrelsome disposition. In a postscript to the *Motto*, he exclaims,—

Quite thro' this Island hath my *Motto* rung,
And twenty days are past since I uphung
My bold *Impreza*, which defiance throws
At all the malice of *Fair Virtue's* foes*.

But, although no person had answered his challenge, his enemies, hoping to “move his choler and his patience shake,” had hired some rhymers

To chew
Their rancour into balladry.

The only known work to which his allusion can apply was Taylor's *Motto*, published in 1621, and playfully dedicated to *Every Body*, as Wither's had been to *Any Body*†. Of Taylor, or to speak of him in more familiar terms, the Water-poet, a most interesting account has been given by Dr. Southey, in his notice of uneducated poets. Taylor was an honest right-hearted man, a sincere and devoted loyalist, and a very good poet for a waterman. He was also no mean scholar, having read

* Probably in allusion to the custom, among fencing-masters and others, frequently mentioned in old plays, of fixing a challenge on a post. Beaumont refers to this practice in his verses to Fletcher upon the *Faithful Shepherdess*.

† In 1625 was printed at Oxford, an “*Answer to Wither's Motto*, without a frontispiece; wherein *nec habeo, nec careo, nec curo*, are neither approved nor confuted, but modestly controuled or qualified by F. G., Esq.” The object of this tract, according to Park, (*Brit. Bib.*, v. 1, p. 189) is to point out some contradictory passages in Wither's *Motto*, which either the timidity or ignorance of the writer prevented him from doing effectually. From the manner in which Wither alludes to the *Motto* in the *Præmonition to Britain's Remembrancer*, it seems probable that the ‘Balladry’ particularly referred to has been lost. His words are, “Against my *Motto*, though (as I forespake) it redounded to their own shame, so raged my adversaries, that not content with my personal troubles, they sought the disparagement of that book by a libellous answer thereunto. * * * And then, also, it was very gloriously fixed on the gate of my lodging, as if it had been some bill of triumph. But it proved a ridiculous pamphlet, and became more loss and disgrace unto the divulggers thereof than I desired.”

Homer, Virgil, Ovid, and Tasso, of course in translations, besides many worthies of his own country. He wrote also with great facility. His *Motto*, we learn from his own narrative, was written in "three days at most;" but so far was its author from entertaining any feeling of enmity, or even rivalry against Wither, that he distinctly says,

This *Motto* in my head at first I took
In imitation of a better book.

It is scarcely necessary to say that this "better book" was Wither's *Motto*.

The earliest extant copy of *Fidelia* bears the date of 1619; but we are told by the publisher, George Norton, that it had long since "been imprinted for the use of the author, to bestow it on such as had voluntarily requested it in way of adventure*." Mr. Park thinks that it was privately circulated, perhaps with a hope of a pecuniary return, in order to assist the writer during his imprisonment in the Marshalsea. The title of *Fidelia* may have been suggested by Spenser, who had bestowed the appellation upon Faith in the *Faerie Queen*. *Fidelia* is described as the "fragment of some greater poem, and discovers the modest affections of a discreet and constant woman shadowed under the name of Fidelia." The charm of the epistle consists in its domestic tenderness, and in the natural air of melancholy fondness breathing through it in every line. The influence of the absence of a beloved object upon the fairest scenes of nature has rarely been portrayed with more truth or pathos. The hawthorn her friend had trimmed, the bank

* It also appeared in 1620, 1622, 1633, and lastly, under the editorship of Sir Egerton Brydges, in 1815. George Norton kept a shop at the sign of the Red Bull, near Temple Bar.—*Brit. Bibliog.*, v. 1, p. 184.

on which he lay near a shady mulberry, and the twilight harbours where the shadows seemed to woo

The weary lovesick passenger to sit,
are all affectionately remembered.

Annexed to *Fidelia* are two sonnets, *Hence away, thou Siren, leave me*, and *Shall I wasting in Despair*, both of which have been reprinted in Percy's *Reliques of Ancient English Poetry*. The second song Park thinks had its prototype in Browne's *Britannia's Pastorals*, but he assigns no reason for giving the priority of invention to Browne. The beauty of these sonnets has been universally acknowledged. *Shall I wasting in Despair*, which it has been kindly observed, Ben Jonson did Wither the honour to parody, was a general favourite during the Author's life-time. Numerous imitations of it have been pointed out. These poems were subsequently incorporated into *Fair-Virtue*, with some alterations, as Park has observed, not always for the better.

In the same year appeared the *Preparation for the Psalter*, a specimen of a voluminous commentary upon the *Psalms*, which the author never completed. Yet even here the polemical spirit of the Satirist occasionally manifests itself. Wither, unfortunately, did not sufficiently remember when he stood upon Holy Ground. To the *Preparation* he prefixed what he calls a Sonnet, forming a very spirited paraphrase upon the 148th Psalm. Merrick's version will read coldly after the following:—

Come, O come, with sacred lays,
Let us sound th' Almighty's praise.
Hither bring in true concent,
Heart, and voice, and instrument.
Let the orpharion sweet
With the harp and viol meet:

To your voices tune the lute ;
Let not tongue, nor string be mute ;
Nor a creature dumb be found,
That hath either voice or sound.

Let such things as do not live,
In still music praises give :
Lowly pipe, ye worms that creep,
On the earth, or in the deep,
Loud aloft your voices strain,
Beasts and monsters of the main.
Birds, your warbling treble sing ;
Clouds, your peals of thunder ring ;
Sun and moon, exalted higher,
And you, stars, augment the quire.

Come, ye sons of human race,
In this chorus take your place,
And amid this mortal throng,
Be you masters of the song.
Angels and celestial powers,
Be the noblest tenor yours.
Let, in praise of God, the sound
Run a never-ending round ;
That our holy hymn may be
Everlasting, as is HE.

From the earth's vast hollow womb,
Music's deepest base shall come.
Sea and floods, from shore to shore,
Shall the counter-tenor roar.
To this concert, when we sing,
Whistling winds, your descant bring :
Which may bear the sound above,
Where the orb of fire doth move ;
And so climb from sphere to sphere,
Till our song th' Almighty hear.

So shall HE from Heaven's high tower,
On the earth his blessings shower ;

All this huge wide orb we see,
Shall one quire, one temple be.
There our voices we will rear,
Till we fill it every where :
And enforce the fiends that dwell
In the air, to sink to hell.
Then, O come, with sacred lays,
Let us sound th' Almighty's praise.

In the *Preparation to the Psalter*, Wither announced his intention of dividing his Treatise upon the Psalms into fifteen Decades. The Exercises upon the First Psalm were published in 1620, and inscribed to Sir John Smith, Knt., only son of Sir Thomas Smith, Governor of the East India Company, from whom the poet had received many tokens of regard. The Exercises upon the nine following Psalms, we are told in the *Fides Anglicana*, were lost.

In 1621 Wither published the *Songs of the Old Testament*, translated into English measures; afterwards reprinted in the *Hymns and Songs of the Church*.

One of the most beautiful and least known of Wither's early productions, is *Fair Virtue, the Mistress of Philarete*, which, although not published until 1622, is described as one of his "first poems, and composed many years ago." The MS. having been secretly "gotten out of the author's custody by a friend of his," came into the hands of Marriot, the bookseller, who having obtained a license for it, intended to print it without any further inquiry: but hearing accidentally the name of Wither mentioned as the real author, Marriot applied to him for permission to affix his name to the title-page, a request he found the poet unwilling to comply with, "fearing that the seeming lightness of such a subject might somewhat disparage the more serious studies" he had

since undertaken. These particulars are gathered from the address to the reader, professedly written by Marriot, but in reality furnished to him, at his own desire, by Wither himself. Wither at length consented that *Fair Virtue* should be published, but without his name; and in compliance with his wish, the title-page bears this quaint inscription:—*Fair Virtue, the Mistress of Philarete, written by Himself.* He accompanied the poem with these singular words, “When I first composed it I well liked thereof, and it well enough became my years; but now I neither like nor dislike it. That, therefore, it should be divulged I desire not; and whether it be, or whether (if it happen so) it be approved or no, *I care not.* For this I am sure of, that however it be valued, it is worth as much as I prize it at; likely it is, also, to be beneficial to the world, as the world hath been to me, and will be more than those who like it not ever deserved at my hands.”

The mystery hanging over certain parts of the poem, Wither refused to clear up, being unwilling, he said, to take away the occupation of his interpreter, and he purposely left somewhat remaining doubtful, to see “what Sir Politick Would-be and his companions could pick out of it.” Whether, therefore, to employ the words of the address, the *Mistress of Philarete* be really a woman shadowed under the name of Virtue, or Virtue only whose loveliness is represented by the beauty of an excellent woman, or whether it mean both together I cannot tell you. Wither was anxious to bury the subject in obscurity, but the opinion that he intended to portray the charms and piety of some lady in the neighbourhood of Bentworth seems to be corroborated by certain “verses written to his loving friend upon his departure,” inserted

at the end of *Fair Virtue*, and signed "Phil'arete;" in which he describes her to have given "her vows" to another, and urges the propriety of their separation.

The *Mistress of Philarete* was evidently the production of Wither's youthful Muse, and bears internal evidence of having been composed in the sequestered retirements of Bentworth and its neighbourhood. The poem opens with an introduction in heroic metre, unlike his later style, and resembling rather the soft and limpid versification of Browne:—

Two pretty rills do meet, and, meeting, make
Within one valley a large silver lake,
About whose banks the fertile mountains stood,
In ages passéd bravely crown'd with wood;
Which lending cold sweet shadows gave it grace
To be accounted Cynthia's bathing-place.
And from her father Neptune's brackish court,
Fair Thetis hither often would resort,
Attended by the fishes of the sea,
Which in those sweeter waters came to play.
There would the daughter of the sea-god dive;
And thither came the land-nymphs every eve,
To wait upon her; bringing for her brows
Rich garlands of sweet flowers, and beechy boughs;

For pleasant was that pool; and near it then
Was neither rotten marsh, nor boggy fen.
It was not overgrown with boisterous sedge,
Nor grew there rudely then along the edge
A bending willow, nor a prickly bush,
Nor broad-leaf'd flag, nor reed, nor knotty rush.
But here, well order'd was a grove with bowers,
There grassy plots set round about with flowers.
Here, you might thro' the waters see the land
Appear, strew'd o'er with white, or yellow sand.
Yea, deeper was it: and the wind by whiffs
Would make it rise, and wash the little cliffs

On which oft pluming sat unfrighted then,
The gagglings wild-geese, and the snow-white swan ;
With all the flocks of fowls, which to this day,
Upon those quiet waters breed and play.

All the features of this animated landscape are not yet obliterated. The Ford of Arle, or Arlesford Pond, lying S.W. of the town of that name, is a fine piece of water, covering nearly two hundred acres, and forming a head to the river Itchin. A few years ago boats were kept upon this lake by the proprietors of the neighbouring estates, and "the gagglings wild-geese" might be seen "oft pluming," without any fear, upon the quiet waters :

North-east, not far from this great pool, there lies
A tract of beechy mountains that arise,
With leisurely ascending, to such height,
As from their tops the warlike Isle of Wight
You in the ocean's bosom may espie,
Tho' near two hundred furlongs hence it lie.
The pleasant way, as up those hills you climb,
Is strewed o'er with marjoram and thyme
Which grows unset. The hedge-rows do not want
The cowslip, violet, primrose, nor a plant
That freshly scents : as birch, both green and tall,
Low sallows on whose bloomings bees do fall,
Fair woodbines, which about the hedges twine,
Smooth privet, and the sharp sweet eglantine,
With many more, whose leaves and blossoms fair,
The earth adorn, and oft perfume the air.

E'en there, and in the least frequented place
Of all these mountains, is a little space
Of pleasant ground, hemm'd in with dropping trees,
And those so thick, that Phœbus scarcely sees
The earth they grow on once in all the year,
Nor what is done among the shadows there.

Along these sequestered paths the poet represents "a troop of beauties,"

Known well nigh
Through all the plains of happy Britainy.

meeting, in their wanderings, the

Little flock of Pastor Philaret,

a shepherd's lad, the first who had ever sung his loves
to those beechy groves.

They saw him not, nor them perceived he,
For in the branches of a maple-tree
He shrouded sat, and taught the hollow hill
To echo forth the music of his quill,
Whose tattling voice redoubled to the sound,
That where he was conceal'd they quickly found.

Philarete leads the ladies to a harbour, and they entreat him to sing. At first he refuses, but at length complies, and commences the poem. That a composition like *Fair Virtue*, abounding in beauties of a high order, should have remained in almost total oblivion from the edition of 1633, until Sir Egerton Brydges' reprint in 1818, certainly reflects no credit upon the editors of our elder poets. Bishop Percy had, indeed, with an impropriety of taste singular in that accomplished scholar, pronounced the *Mistress of Philarete* "a long pastoral piece;" but even the extract given in the *Reliques* might have tempted the reader to seek the work itself. Into the merits of the poem, however, I cannot enter, for I am anxious to confine myself to the more strictly religious productions of its author. Viewed as the composition of a very young man, *Fair Virtue* may safely challenge comparison with any poetical work in the language, produced at a similar age*. Its perusal

* In a sonnet at the end of *Fair Virtue*, Wither says, of summers he had seen "twice three times three."

may be recommended to every lover of pure and unaffected poetry. He will find in it passages of the most passionate beauty, of the sweetest and clearest simplicity, of the most delicate fancy, and the most picturesque description, and all "set forth" in a harmony of versification not often found in the poetry of the reign of James.

When Philarete had ended his song and departed, a lady from among the Nymphs, having taken up her lute, commemorated his talents in a little carol, entitled *The Nymph's Song*. I cannot refrain from quoting a few stanzas from this song, which it would be difficult to excel either in melody or purity of expression :—

Gentle swain good speed befall thee,
And in love still prosper thou :
Future times shall happy call thee,
Though thou lie neglected now.
Virtue's lovers shall commend thee,
And perpetual fame attend thee.

Happy are these woody mountains
In whose shadows thou dost hide ;
And as happy are those fountains
By whose murmurs thou dost bide ;
For contents are here excelling
More than in a prince's dwelling.

There thy flocks do clothing bring thee ;
And thy food out of the fields :
Pretty songs the birds do sing thee ;
Sweet perfumes the meadow yields.
And what more is worth the seeing,
Heaven and earth thy prospect being ?

Thy affection reason measures
And distempers none it feeds ;

Still so harmless are thy pleasures
That no other's grief it breeds.

And if night begets thee sorrow,
Seldom stays it till the morrow.

Who does not regret that the wish breathed in the concluding stanzas of this song was not realized, that the poet did not continue to dwell in peace among those "lonely groves," by no false visions of ambition or of hope allured into the tumult of active life, where he could gain nothing to compensate for the serenity and happiness he left behind!

Wither's favourite poets, at this time, seem to have been "Sweet Drayton," as he calls him, Thomas Lodge, and Sir Philip Sidney.

Mr. D'Israeli, in his amusing *Quarrels of Authors*, has not made any mention of the enmity which appears to have subsisted between Wither and Ben Jonson. The latter poet, in his *Masque of Time Vindicated*, which was represented with great splendour on the 19th of January, 1623, gave utterance to his dislike. Mr. Gifford thinks this poem a "kind of retort courteous" to the scurrilous satires of the day, and *Chronomastix* a generic name for the herd of libellists; but Wither, in the 7th canto of *Britain's Remembrancer*, considers the epithet applied particularly to himself. Speaking of the poetasters who delighted to disparage his talents, he says,

The valiant poet they [me] in scorn do call,
The Chronomastix.

When Wither published his *Abuses*, &c., he spoke in honourable terms of "the deep conceits of now flourishing Jonson," and it is not improbable that, while a gay and idle member of Lincoln's Inn, he may have quaffed a cup of claret with Ben at his favourite "House of

Call," in Friday Street. At any rate their intimacy was soon divided, and frequent expressions of disgust may be found in Wither's poems, at the wine-parties and revelings of Jonson. There was, indeed, no bond of union between them, either in disposition or genius. Jonson, with his recondite learning, his antique imagery, and his "fil'd" language, looked with unconcealed contempt upon the simplicity and homeliness of the Shepherd-poet. Wither often complained that the want of antiquity and reading was frequently charged against him by rival poets.

Jonson, who sought for his treasures among the "drowned lands" of ancient days, could not be expected to feel much sympathy with one who found music "in the least bough's rustling," and a spirit of sweet poetry in "the yellow broom" at his feet."

I have already alluded to the *Songs and Hymns of the Church*. None of Wither's numerous works possess greater interest. Their history is detailed at length in the *Scholler's Purgatory*, a pamphlet addressed, about the year 1624, to Archbishop Abbot and the other Bishops of the Convocation, in vindication of the Patent. The *Hymns and Songs* arose out of a translation of Psalms of which notice will be subsequently taken. Wither observed that the "excellent expressions of the Holy Ghost" were put forth in rude and barbarous numbers, while "the wanton fancies were painted and trimmed out in the most moving language;" and that the people, like those against whom the prophet Haggai complained, seemed "to dwell in cieled houses," while the temple of God was laid waste. Seeing, therefore, no other person prepared to make the attempt, he spent about three years in fitting himself for the task of trans-

lating the Psalms, but before he "had half ended them," the report "that one of much better proficiency had made a long and happy progress into the work," induced him for a time to relinquish his labours. But that his original intention might not be altogether disappointed, at the request of some of the clergy, he translated and rendered into lyric verse the hymns dispersed throughout the Canonical Scriptures, to which he subsequently added spiritual songs appropriated to the several times and occasions observable in the Church of England. It was for this collection that the royal patent had been obtained. Wither found a body of most active and malignant enemies in the Company of Stationers, who considered their own privileges invaded by Wither's patent. Among other things, they asserted that the hymns were written for his pecuniary benefit alone, a charge to which he in part pleaded guilty. "My weak fortunes," he says, "my troubles, and the chargeableness of a study that brings with it no outward supply, put me into a kind of necessity, as it were, to cast my thoughts aside unto worldly prospects. But I have since been sorry for it upon better consideration."

Wither's anxiety respecting his Hymns may be pardoned. He had been induced by the kind and flattering favour of the King "to engage his credit almost 300*l.* further, to divulge the book," and by the animosity of the stationers, he felt himself deprived not only of all superfluities, but even of the means of subsistence. "For when those friends," he adds, "who are engaged for me, are satisfied, to which purpose there is yet, I praise God, sufficient set apart, I vow, in the faith of an honest man, that there will not be left me in all the world, to defend me against my adversaries and supply the common

necessities of nature, so much as will feed me for one week, unless I labour for it."

His vindication of his own fitness for the work he had undertaken is manly and eloquent:—

"I wonder what divine calling Sternhold and Hopkins had more than I have, that their metrical Psalms may be allowed of rather than my Hymns. Surely if to have been groom of the Privy Chamber were sufficient to qualify them, that profession which I am of may as well fit me for what I have undertaken, who having first laid the foundation of my studies in one of our famous Universities, have ever since builded thereon towards the erecting of such fabrics as I have now in hand.

"But I would gladly know by what rule those men discern of spirits who condemn my work as the endeavour of a private spirit. The time was, men did judge the tree by its fruit; but now, they will judge the fruit by the tree. If I have expressed any thing repugnant to the analogy of the Christian Faith, or irreverently opposed the orderly and allowed discipline, or dissented in any point from that spirit of verity which breathes through the Holy Catholic Church, then let that which I have done be taxed for the work of a private spirit. Or if it may appear that I have indecently intruded to meddle with those mysteries of our Christian Sanctuary, which the God of order hath, by his Divine law, reserved for those who have, according to his Ordinance, a special calling thereunto, then, indeed, let me be taxed as deserving both punishment and reproof.

"But if, making conscience of my actions, I observed that seemly distance which may make it appear I intruded not upon ought appropriated to the outward ministry; if, like an honest-hearted Gibeonite, I have

but a little extraordinarily laboured to hew wood and to draw water for the spiritual sacrifices; if, according to the art of the apothecary, I have composed a sweet perfume to offer unto God, in such manner as is proper to my own faculty only, and then brought it to those to whom the consecration thereof belongs; if, keeping my own place, I have laboured for the building up of God's house, as I am bound to do, in offering up of that which God hath given me, and making use, with modesty, of those gifts which were bestowed on me to that purpose; if, I say, the case be so, what blame-worthy have I done? Why should those disciples who follow Christ in a nearer place, forbid us from doing good in his name, who follow him further off? Why should they, with Joshua, forbid Eldad and Medad from prophesying, seeing that every good Christian wisheth, with Moses, that God's people were all prophets, and that he would give his spirit to them all."

This passage is interesting on many accounts, especially as showing the sentiments of Wither towards the established Church. In another part of the same pamphlet he declares, in a strain of vigour and richness almost worthy of Jeremy Taylor himself, that neither the swelling impostumations of vain-glory, nor the itchings of singularity, nor the ticklings of self-love, nor the convulsions of envy, nor the inflammations of revenge, nor the hunger and thirst of gold, were able to move him to the prosecution of any thing repugnant to religion or the authority of the Church*. So highly

* The same sentiment had been before expressed in the *Motto*:—

In my religion I dare entertain
No fancies hatched in mine own weak brain,
Nor private spirits, but am ruled by
The Scriptures, and that Church authority.

were Wither's talents and honesty at this time esteemed, that he was even urged to take Holy Orders ; and his "possibilities of outward preferments in that way, he tells us, were not the least." But "while no man living more honoured the calling," he considered himself disabled by his own unworthiness, independent of the belief he constantly indulged, that God had appointed him "to serve him in some other course."

Very tempting overtures had also been made to Wither by some of the numerous sectaries of the day, and he declared that he had been offered a larger yearly stipend, and more "respective entertainments to employ himself in setting forth heretical fancies than he had any probability of obtaining by the profession of the truth. Yea, sometimes," he continues, "I have been wooed to the profession of their wild and ill-grounded opinions by the sectaries of so many several separations, that had I liked, or rather had not God been the more merciful to me, I might have been Lieutenant, if not Captain, of some new band of such volunteers long e'er this time."

These were the sentiments of the writer in 1623-4.

Nothing was left undone on the part of the stationers to annoy or injure the unfortunate poet. They refused to provide copies of the *Hymns* in their shops, alleging as their excuse "that none would fetch them out of their hands," although Wither assures us in his *Scholler's Purgatory*, that the work was so much inquired after, that twenty thousand might have been speedily dispersed. Some compared the *Hymns* to "Dod the Silkman's" version of the Psalms, which had been recently condemned to the fire ; and others styled them in derision, "Wither's Sonnets," and said that they would procure "the roving ballad-singer, with one leg," to sell them

about the city. Wither's miseries were not confined to the malignant opposition of the stationers. "Wherever I come," he complained, "one giddy brain or another offers to fall into disputation with me about my Hymns ; yea, brokers, and costermongers, and tapsters, and pedlars, and sempsters, and fiddlers, and felt-makers, and all the brotherhood of Amsterdam, have scoffingly passed sentence upon me in their conventicles, at tap-houses and taverns."

It was natural that Wither should feel bitterly these attacks of the ignorant and malevolent, and he alludes with pardonable self-satisfaction to the Christian intentions with which the Sacred Songs had been composed, and the many hours at midnight he had devoted to their study when his traducers were asleep. The composition of his Hymns had contributed to beguile the tedious and melancholy hours of his imprisonment in the Marshalsea. Wither is not the only poet whose harp has given utterance to the sweetest and holiest music while it hung upon the willow-tree. It was in a lonely dungeon at Coimbra, in Portugal, that the accomplished Buchanan prepared his elegant translation of the *Psalms*. A list of books produced during confinement would be both interesting and instructive. The names of Boëthius, of Grotius, and of Raleigh, arise immediately to the memory*.

The *Hymns and Songs of the Church* are known to many

* I find the following notices in the Journals of the House of Commons. "One hath a patent of sole printing on one side : hath been often warned to bring it in. To have the sergeant at arms go for him. Ordered. The like for Wither's patent."—*J. of H. of C.*, May 15, 1624.

"After complaint made against Withers, the sergeant's man, who took him, related at the bar how he was withstood and abused by one at whose house Withers lay. That Withers assisted him, and kept him from wrong."—*J. of H. of C.*, May 22, 1624.

It is probable that these extracts apply to our poet.

of my readers, and can hardly fail of being admired for their unaffected piety, and plaintive harmony of expression. They breathe a domestic tenderness and simplicity not more rare than precious. Take for example two stanzas from the *Thanksgiving for Victory*:—

We love thee, Lord, we praise thy name,
 Who by Thy great almighty arm,
 Hast kept us from the spoil and shame
 Of those that sought our causeless harm :
 Thou art our life, our triumph-song,
 The joy and comfort of our heart,
 To Thee all praises do belong,
 And Thou the Lord of armies art.

This song we therefore sing to Thee,
 And pray that Thou for ever more
 Wouldst our Protector deign to be,
 As at this time and heretofore.
 That Thy continual favour shown
 May cause us more to Thee incline,
 And make throughout the world be known
 That such as are our foes, are Thine.

The prayer for *Seasonable Weather* is not less simple and earnest.

Lord, should the sun, the clouds, the wind,
 The air and seasons be
 To us so froward and unkind,
 As we are false to Thee ;
 All fruits would quite away be burn'd,
 Or lie in water drown'd,
 Or blasted be, or overturn'd,
 Or chill'd on the ground.

But from our duty though we swerve,
 Thou still dost mercy show,
 And deign Thy creatures to preserve
 That men might thankful grow ;

Yet, though from day to day we sin,
And Thy displeasure gain,
No sooner we to cry begin,
But pity we obtain.

The weather now Thou changéd hast,
That put us late to fear,
And when our hopes were almost past,
Then comfort did appear.
The heaven the earth's complaint hath heard,
They reconciled be,
And Thou such weather hast prepar'd,
As we desir'd of Thee.

The touching pathos of these verses will be felt by all. Wither seems to have been convinced, with Johnson, that Omnipotence could not be exalted, and that perfection could not be improved. His language is unadorned and homely, and the thoughts such as would naturally arise to a calm and benevolent mind. Yet his humblest strains frequently awake a cheerfulness and serenity in the heart of the reader. The spirit of his supplication is so pure and beautiful, that we do not doubt for an instant that the golden sceptre of mercy will be extended to it*.

The Hymns and Songs were set to music by Orlando Gibbons, one of the most distinguished musicians of his time, and many of whose compositions, particularly the *Hosanna*, are still extant in the Cathedral books. The tunes to which he adapted Wither's Hymns are described by Sir John Hawkins as melodies in two parts, and excellent in their kind†. Gibbons died about two years

* The Hymns were approved by the Archbishop of Canterbury, and Wither declared, with exultation, that in the Spiritual Songs the learned prelate only required the alteration of one word.

† *History of Music*, vol. iv., p. 35.

after the publication of the Hymns, in his 45th year, and was buried in the Cathedral of Canterbury.

Wither was a spectator of the plague which desolated the metropolis in 1625, and thirty-six years afterwards he declared, that he did "in affection thereunto make here his voluntary residence, when hundreds of thousands forsook their habitations, that if God spared his life during that mortality, he might be a remembrancer both to this city and the whole nation*." The results of his melancholy experience he afterwards embodied in *Britain's Remembrancer*. The history of this singular poem furnishes another proof of the indomitable perseverance of his character. "It is above two years," he tells us, "since I laboured to get this book printed, and it hath cost me more labour, more money, more pains, and much more time to publish, than to compose it; for I was fain to imprint every sheet thereof with my own hand, because I could not get allowance to do it publicly†." The printers were naturally unwilling to become 'remembrancers in this kind;' almost every page contained enough objectionable matter to send them to Newgate.

* *Crums and Scraps lately found in a Prisoner's Basket at Newgate*, by Geo. Wither, 1661. Wither's example was followed, in 1665, by Thomas Vincent, a minister of the Gospel, who remained in London during the plague, with the express object of keeping alive in himself and others the memory of the Judgment. See *God's Terrible Voice to the City*, by T. V., 1667.

† Ben Jonson, in *Time Vindicated*, has satirized the custom, then very prevalent among the pamphleteers of the day, of providing themselves with a portable press, which they moved from one hiding-place to another with great facility. He insinuates that Chronomastix, under whom he intended to represent Wither, employed one of these presses. Thus, upon the entrance of the Mutes.

Fame. What are this pair?

Eyes. The ragged rascals?

Fame. Yes.

Eyes. These rogues; you'd think them rogues,
But they are friends:
One is his printer in disguise, and keeps
His press in a hollow tree.

The plague first broke out in the house of a Frenchman, "without the Bishop-gate," and Wither describes with considerable animation the general consternation that ensued upon the dreadful discovery, and the multitude of remedies and preventives proposed. The streets were carefully cleansed, and all kinds of herbs and perfumes, "pure frankincense or myrrh," or in the absence of these, pitch, rosin, tar, &c., were burnt to purify the air*. Then arose the race of empirics: one had "a perfume of special note;" another, an antidote which had been applied with the greatest success at Constantinople, when a thousand persons died daily. Instructions, equally ineffectual, were also published by authority. The contagion or non-contagion of the plague, was also a favourite subject of discussion. Wither is a decided advocate of non-contagion, and his arguments are supported by the fact that very few sextons or surgeons died; that among the market-people who brought provisions into the city, he did not hear of any deaths, and that in the parish where he resided, and in which the mortality amounted to nearly "half a thousand" weekly, not one of the common bearers of the dead fell a victim to the pestilence. Wither was at this time living by "Thames' fair bank," probably in the Savoy, which appears to have been a favourite situation with him.

The plague, which at first spread slowly, soon rushed out with terrible fury, in spite of the "halberds and watches." But the steps of the destroyer were wrapt in

* In *An Advice set down by the most learned in Physic within this Realm*, annexed to Orders of the Privy Council, in 1625, was the following recipe for correcting the air in houses. "Take rosemary dried, or juniper, bay-leaves or Frankincense, cast the same into a chafing-dish, and receive the fume or smoke thereof."

Many persons wore round their necks amulets made of arsenic, which they esteemed an infallible prophylactic.

mystery, no man could tell his going out or coming in; people looked with terror and dismay upon each other.

————— Men were fearful grown
 To tarry or converse among their own.
 Friends fled each other; kinsmen stood aloof;
 The son to come within his father's roof
 Presumed not; the mother was constrain'd
 To let her child depart unentertain'd.

Britain's Remembrancer, canto 2.

In the midst of the general confusion and flight of the inhabitants, we learn that the Lord Mayor, uninfluenced by the desertion of his brother magistrates, remained at his post, and devoted himself to the heavy duties that devolved upon him. On the 21st of June, a general fast was agreed to by the House of Commons; and, on the 11th of July, Parliament adjourned from Westminster, and met at Oxford on the 1st of August. Wither, meanwhile, having "thrown his own affairs aside," employed himself in walking about the city.

But far I needed not to pace about,
 Nor long inquire to find such objects out;
 For every place with sorrows then abounded,
 And every way the cries of mourning sounded.
 Yea, day by day, successively till night,
 And from the evening till the morning light
 Were scenes of grief with strange variety,
 Knit up in one continuing tragedy.
 No sooner waked I, but twice twenty knells,
 And many sadly-sounding passing bells
 Did greet mine ear, and by their heavy tolls,
 To me gave notice—that some early souls
 Departed whilst I slept; that others—some
 Were drawing onward to their longest home.

So long the solitary nights did last,
 That I had leisure my accounts to cast.

And think upon, and over-think those things,
Which darkness, loneliness, and sorrow brings.
My chamber entertained me all alone,
And in the rooms adjoining lodged none.
Yet through the darksome silent night did fly
Sometime an uncouth noise, sometime a cry,
And sometimes mournful callings pierced my room,
Which came I neither knew from whence, nor whom.
And oft betwixt awaking and asleep,
Their voices, who did talk, or pray, or weep,
Unto my listening ears a passage found,
And troubled me by their uncertain sound.

Glad was I when I saw the sun appear,
(And with his rays to bless our hemisphere)
That from the tumbled bed I might arise,
And with some lightsomeness refresh mine eyes;
Or with some good companions read or pray,
To pass the better my sad thoughts away.

The poet then describes the deserted appearance of London, as he beheld it in his walks: "much-peopled Westminster" was almost entirely forsaken, and Whitehall, which, not three months before, had been the scene of festivity and courtly merriment, now lay solitary.

As doth a quite forsaken monastery,
In some lone forest, and we could not pass
To many places, but thro' weeds and grass.

The Strand, then the residence of the most powerful and wealthy of the nobility, where Wither had often seen "well nigh a million passing in one day," had nearly become an unfrequented road; no smoke from the "city houses" told of hospitality and mirth. The Inns of Court were deserted; the "Royal Change," the great mart for all nations, was avoided as "a place of certain danger," and the Cathedral of St. Paul's had

“scarce a walker in its middle aisle*.” The houses, too, looked uninhabited; no ladies in their “bravery and beauty,”

To their closed wickets made repair,
The empty casements gaped wide for air.

A more perfect picture of sorrow and desolation could scarcely be conveyed than in this line. Disease brought its companion, poverty; numbers wandered about the streets in miserable destitution. Wither relates an affecting instance. Wandering forth on his customary walk one evening,

When the waning light
Was that which could be called nor day nor night.

he met with one who on him “cast a ruthless eye.”

Methought I heard him somewhat softly say,
As if that he for some relief did pray.
He bashfully replied, that indeed
He was ashamed to speak aloud what need
Did make him softly mutter. Somewhat more
He would have spoken, but his tongue forbore
To tell the rest, because his eyes did see
Their tears had almost drawn forth tears from me,
And that my hand was ready to bestow
That help which my poor fortunes did allow.—Canto 4.

If, oppressed with the loneliness and mourning of the

* The aisles of St. Paul’s were very generally frequented by the idle and inquisitive; allusions to this custom abound in our older poets. In the *Mastive*, &c., written about the year 1604-5, it is asked,

————— Who’s yond’ marching hither?
Some brave low-country Captain, with his feather
And high-crown’d hat: see, into Paul’s he goes,
To show his doublet and Italian hose.

In Jonson’s *Every Man in his Humour*, the celebrated Captain Bobadill is “a Paul’s man;” and in *Every Man out of his Humour*, the first scene of the third Act is laid in the middle aisle of St. Paul’s.—See Gifford’s edition of the works of Ben Jonson, and Reed’s *Old Plays*, vol. vii, p. 136.

town, he wandered into the fields, the scene was scarcely less painful :—

About the fields ran one, who being fled,
In spite of his attendants, from his bed,
This way a stranger by his host expell'd,
That way a servant, shut from where he dwell'd,
Came weakly staggering forth (and crush'd beneath
Diseases and unkindness) sought for death,
Which soon was found. Canto 4.

It was natural that the poet should contrast with the present melancholy, the cheerfulness of past summers, when the dash of the oar kept time with the music upon the crowded river, and “Islington and Tottenham-court” were visited by pleasure-parties for their “cakes and cream*.”

Among the most terrible symptoms of the plague was the insanity that sometimes accompanied it. A painful instance occurred in the house where Wither resided. “A plague-sick man,” under the influence of this delirium, believing that Death had assumed a dreadful and loathsome shape, besought those around, with most piteous cries, to draw the curtains; and, having “rested awhile,” he started from the bed, and running to the couch on which his wife lay, threw himself upon his knees, and

Both his hands uprearing,
As if his eye had seen pale Death appearing,
To strike his wife,

entreated him to spare her†.

* During the reign of James the First and Charles the First, Islington was a favourite resort, on account of its rich dairies. In that part of the manor of Highbury at the lower end of Islington, there were, in 1611, eight inns, principally supported by summer visitors.—See *Nelson's History of Islington*, p. 38, 4to., 1811.

† Cases of sudden death from the plague sometimes occurred. Mr. Joseph Mead, writing to Sir Martin Stuteville, July 2d, says, “I am

But it was not until after many weeks, when Wither had gone out in the morning and returned in the evening in safety, that it pleased God to send his "dreadful messenger" to the poet's dwelling. The pestilence attacked the occupants with so much violence as quickly to destroy five, and leave "another wounded." Wither now began to feel all the terrors of doubting faith and superstitious alarm. He grew weaker every day, but communicated his sufferings or apprehensions to no man. After having passed a sleepless night, he awoke one morning with the *round ruddy spots*, the fatal signs of infection, upon his breast and shoulders, but the mercy of the Almighty, in whom he had put his trust, brought him out of this great danger. The ominous spots, however, continued for some time upon his body.

The plague having now attained its height, began to decline; the number of deaths diminished daily, and before the winter was ended, the citizens had returned to their homes, and

Another brood

Soon fill'd the houses which unpeopled stood.—Canto 5.

John Fletcher, the dramatic poet, perished in this pestilence. He had been invited to accompany a gentleman, "of Norfolk or Suffolk," into the country, and only remained in London while a suit of clothes was being made; but before it was completed, he fell sick of the plague, and died. We are indebted for this anecdote to Aubrey, who had it from Fletcher's tailor. I may

told that my Lord Russel being to go to Parliament, had his shoe-maker to pull on his boots, who fell down dead of the plague in his presence. Whereupon he abstains from that honourable Assembly, and hath sent the Lords notice of this accident."—Ellis's *Original Letters*, vol. iii. p. 205.

add the name of Thomas Lodge, who is supposed to have been removed by the same calamity. He was a physician in the reign of Queen Elizabeth, and Philips, in the *Theatrum Poetarum*, calls him "one of the writers of those pretty old songs and madrigals which were very much the strain of those times." Lodge, perhaps, deserves higher praise. A sweet and serious vein of feeling runs through some of his poems, particularly *Old Damon's Pastoral*.

It is impossible to contemplate the conduct of Wither during this season of grief and suffering without a feeling of admiration and respect. Beneath the power of a frightful pestilence, human life was poured out like water. The strength of youth, to use the noble language of Quarles*, was no privilege against it, the soundness of a constitution was no exemption from it: the sovereignty of drugs could not resist it; where it listed it wounded, and where it wounded it destroyed. The rich man's coffers could not bribe it; the skilful artist could not prevail against it; the black magician could not charm it. In the midst of all these perils the Christian poet dwelt serene and undisturbed; throughout the continuance of the plague he never removed from the centre of infection, "the distance of a mile." Yet the arrow flew harmlessly past him by day, the terror did not strike him in the night. He knew that an arm was around him which never wearied, and an eye watching over him which never slumbered or slept. The passages quoted from *Britain's Remembrancer* contain some vivid sketches of the city of the plague. We behold the poet wandering forth in the uncertain twilight among the forsaken walks of the city, and almost hear, so na-

* *Prayers and Meditations.*

turally does he bring the scene before us, the heavy fall of his lingering footsteps along the grass-grown streets, and the creaking of the shutters of some deserted house as they moved to and fro in the midnight wind. Many affecting stories might be added to those already given. The picture of the anxious wife listening to every sound during the absence of her husband, and starting up in terror if any one "knocked or called in haste," is a copy from nature.

After the publication of *Britain's Remembrancer*, we lose sight of Wither until 1631, when we find him assisting the Rev. William Bedwell in the publication of the *Tournament of Tottenham*. Warton, who in his *History of Poetry* particularly mentions this old poem, has omitted to state that it was published from a MS. communicated by Wither; but Bedwell, in the epistle to the reader, confesses the obligation. "It is now," he says, "seven or eight years since I came to the sight of the copy, and that by the means of the worthy and my much honoured good friend, Mr. Ge. Wither; of whom also, now at length I have obtained the use of the same: and because the verse was then by him, a man of exquisite judgment in this kind of learning, much commended, * * * as also for the thing itself, I thought it worth the while, especially at idle times, to transcribe it, and for the honour of the place to make it public."

This was written in the March of 1631. Bedwell was the Rector of Tottenham, to which he had been presented by Bishop Andrews, whom he calls his honourable good Lord and Patron*. He was also one of the translators of the Bible, and an able Oriental scholar.

He bequeathed some valuable Arabic MSS. to the

* In the dedication of the *Kalendarium Viatorium Generale*, 1614.

University of Cambridge, illustrated by numerous original notes, together with a set of types to print them*. Of the *Tournament*, which seems to have been a serio-comic satire upon the chivalrous follies of the 14th century, Warton has given a sufficient specimen.

About this time, according to John Taylor, Wither was steward to Dr. Howson, Bishop of Durham, and the Water-poet, who, after Wither's secession from the King's cause, never ceased to regard him with great displeasure, accuses him of having applied to his own purposes the funds of that Prelate†. I have not been able to discover the slightest allusion to this circumstance in any other writer, nor does Wither any where refer to the connexion. The story altogether is highly improbable, and unworthy of credit. Dr. Howson only enjoyed the See of Durham from September 28th, 1628, to February 6th, 1631-2, and his steward, therefore, whoever he was, did not long reap the benefit of his malpractices.

At length, remembering that he had long since vowed a pilgrimage to the Queen of Bohemia as soon as he had a present worthy of her acceptance, Wither set out for Holland with his version of the *Psalms*, in his "own esteem the best jewel" he possessed. This unfortunate Princess, whose talents and virtues were not more fitted to adorn prosperity, than to cheer and alleviate the sorrows of an adverse fortune, was then seeking to dispel

* Smith's MSS., quoted in Dyer's *History of the University of Cambridge*.

† To Durham's reverend Bishop thou wast cater,
Or steward, where to make thy 'compts seem clear,
Thou mad'st two months of July in one year ;
And in the total reck'ning it was found,
Thou cheat'st the Bishop of five hundred pound.

Aqua-Musæ, p. 5, 1644.

the gloom of her situation by the amusements of her garden and her books. Holland, in the earlier part of the 17th century, abounded in learning, and the sequestered court of Elizabeth made up in brilliancy of intellect what it wanted in splendour of outward circumstances. Among its principal luminaries were Gerard Vorst, the painter; the illustrious Descartes, who, weary of his voluntary banishment at Amsterdam, had taken up his residence in the village of Egmond, from whence he made frequent visits to the Queen, to whose eldest daughter, Elizabeth, he dedicated his *Principia Philosophiæ*; and Anna Schurman, "the gem of Utrecht," a poet, a sculptor, an engraver, and a linguist.

Wither, in his praise of the Queen, only spoke the sentiments of all who knew her; and when he said that she "had conquered a kingdom in the hearts of many millions of people," he probably remembered the appellation of "Queen of Hearts," which the affection of those among whom she lived had bestowed upon her. But his gratitude led him too far; the parallel between the misfortunes of the Queen and those of the Psalmist, might have been omitted with advantage.

His translation was printed in the Netherlands in 1632, in a very neat form. The merits of the work scarcely bear a just proportion to the toil expended on it. The diction is generally clear and simple, and the versification varied and harmonious, yet it can only be viewed as a moderate improvement upon preceding efforts. The most gifted labourer in this Sacred Vineyard can only hope for qualified success, and the highest meed in the power of the critic to award, seems to be the praise of having done best what no one can do well*.

* Johnson.

Sidney, Spenser, and Milton, have each adventured in this difficult path. The Psalms of Spenser are lost: those of Sidney contain some sweet lines; while the specimens given by Milton are only worthy of Hopkins.

Wither obtained for his Psalms a patent, conferring on him the privilege of having them bound up with all Bibles; but this his old enemies, the stationers, refused to do, and the poet complained to the Board of their contempt of the Great Seal.

The following extract from a MS. letter*, supposed to be addressed by Edward Rossingham to Sir Thomas Puckering, on the 23rd of January, 1633, throws an interesting light on this subject.

“ Upon Friday last, Wither, the English poet, convented before the Board all or most of the stationers of London. The matter is this: Mr. Wither hath, to please himself, translated our singing psalms into another verse, which he counts better than those the Church hath so long used, and therefore he hath been at the charge to procure a patent from his Majesty under the Broad Seal, that his translation shall be printed and bound to all Bibles that are sold. The stationers refusing to bind them, and to sell them with the Bible, (the truth is, nobody would buy the Bible with such a clog at the end of it,) and because some of them stood upon their guard, and would not suffer Mr. Wither with his officers to come into their shops and seize upon such Bibles as wanted his additions, therefore he complained of them for a contempt of the great seal. After their Lordships had heard the business *pro* and *con.* at length, their Lordships thought good to

* In the British Museum, communicated by Mr. D'Israeli to Sir Egerton Brydges.

damn his patent in part; that is, that the translation should no longer be sold with the Bible, but only by itself."

Wither's version was followed by Sandys's *Paraphrase*, in 1636, and the translation of Braithwait in 1638.

Sandys had already established a reputation by his celebrated Travels, and the translation of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*. In the beautiful poem *Deo Opt. Max.*, he gratefully records his deliverance from "the bloody massacres" of the faithless Indians, and returns his thanks to that merciful Providence by whom he had been brought home in safety,

Blest with an healthful age, a quiet mind
Content with little.

"It did me good," says Richard Baxter*, "when Mrs. Wyat invited me to see Bexley Abbey, in Kent, to see upon the old stone wall in the garden a summer-house with this inscription, that *In that place Mr. George Sandys, after his travels over the world, retired himself for his poetry and contemplations.*" Dr. Burney considered Sandys's *Paraphrase* superior to any other translation of the Psalms, and his wanderings over the Holy Land certainly contributed to impart a religious enthusiasm to his amiable and poetic mind. He excels in the variety and melody of his metre, and the simplicity and grace of the language.

The version of Braithwait is only rendered valuable by its extreme rarity. It is not noticed either by Anthony Wood, Ellis, or Dr. Bliss. Braithwait was a warm admirer of Wither†, and almost as voluminous an author.

* *Poetical Fragments*, &c.

† And long may England's Thespian springs be known
By lovely Wither, and by bonny Brown.

The poem from which these verses are quoted was printed in 1615.

He was a person of considerable acquirement, and his translation professes to be “conferred with the Hebrew veritie set forth by Arias Montanus, together with the Latin, Greek Septuagint, and Chaldee paraphrase.” Perhaps, as Bliss said of Wyat, he had too much learning for a poet; his Psalms are written, with few exceptions, in a dull monotonous uniformity of measure, and with no elegance of manner.

It is probable that Wither did not continue long in Holland, but the publication of his Emblems, in 1634, may have been promoted by his residence in that country.

A history of Emblems in all languages, with specimens of the poetry and engravings, accompanied by some account of the authors, would be a very interesting contribution to our literature*; but in the present day, a work of so much labour and difficulty will not soon be undertaken. My own limited course of reading has made me acquainted with only a few of the Emblem-writers preceding Wither. Of these, the first, both in time and reputation, is Alciatus, whose life was an unvaried scene of prosperity and flattery. Francis the First patronized him; Pope Paul the Third appointed him Prothonotary; and the King of Spain presented him with a gold chain of considerable value. He was a scholar, a miser, and a glutton; and to the indulgence of his festive appetites his death has been attributed. The Emblems rapidly obtained a wide popularity. They were translated into French verse, by Jean de Fevre, in 1536; by Barthelemi Aneau, a lawyer and poet, in 1549; and by Claude Mignaut, in 1584. They were also soon

* Some learned remarks upon Emblems may be seen in the edition of the *Emblemata* of Alciatus, *Elucidata Doctissimis Claudii Minois Commentariis*.—Lugd., 1614.

rendered into Italian and Spanish. Their poetical merit is small, although Scaliger considered them graceful and elegant, without being weak.

The sixteenth century abounded in Emblems. The *Emblemata* of Sambucus were published in 1564; they are not remarkable for any elegance or purity of Latinity, but the cause of classical literature was materially assisted by their indefatigable and eccentric author. In 1581, appeared the *Emblemata* of Reusner, edited by his brother Jeremiah. Reusner's voluminous labours are now forgotten even in Germany; but the book of *Emblemata Sacra* is valuable on account of the exquisite woodcuts by Virgil Solis, the engraver of Nuremberg, and marked by all the minute delicacy of that artist's manner. Solis also contributed, in the same year, a set of cuts for the Emblems of Alciatus.

Theodore Beza, the "Phoenix of his age," should not be forgotten; his *Emblemata* were printed among the *Poëmata Varia*, in 1597. The Emblems of Lebeus Batilius had issued from Frankfort in the preceding year.

Holland would furnish many interesting specimens for our proposed collection. The celebrated Jacob Cats, who has been called the La Fontaine of his country, published his Emblems in 1618, in Dutch, French, and Latin. Dr. Bowring, in the *Batavian Anthology*, has afforded the uninitiated reader an opportunity of appreciating the merits of this excellent and Christian writer. Bowring's specimens, however, are not taken from the Emblems, which are most attractive, it may be observed, in their Roman dress. It would be superfluous to praise the Latinity of a country which has given birth to an Erasmus and a Grotius.

I believe there are several collections of Emblems in

French. I have only met with two, *Les Devises Héroïques*, by Claude Paradin and others, written in prose, and some emblems by Georgetta Montenay, of which I have seen a translation, published at Frankfort in 1619*.

Geoffrey Whitney occupies the first place among English Emblem-writers. Whitney resided many years on the Continent, and published, at Leyden, a second edition of his Emblems in 1586†. The rarity of this edition precludes any hope of discovering the first. In his dedication to the Earl of Leicester, he dwells upon his "lack of leisure and learning," but permits no opportunity to escape of showing the latter; and if the Earl did not close the book with a very exalted idea of the dignity of poets, it was not owing to Whitney's modesty in asserting it. The Emblems are not destitute of a certain graceful and touching simplicity. His imitation of the 154th Emblem of Alciatus, is one of the most pleasing specimens of his style.

Henry Peacham's *Garden of Heroical Devises*, published in 1612, is equally simple. Peacham's character may be summed up in a few words. He was a scholar, a poet, and a beggar. The most interesting account of his

* Among the MS. books in the King's Library is a volume containing fifty Emblems, *Cinquante Emblèmes Chrestiens premièrement inventez par la noble Demoiselle Georgette de Montenay*, and transcribed *par la main et plume* of Esther Inglis. The MS. is dated from Scotland, in 1624, and dedicated to Williams, then Bishop of Lincoln. It is beautifully written and illustrated, and sumptuously bound in crimson silk embroidered with gold. The fifty Emblems are inscribed to fifty of the most illustrious nobility of the age, including the Earls of Southampton, Pembroke, &c. It is only fair to add, that the flattery does not extend beyond the inscription, each Emblem being devoted to the illustration of some religious truth.

† A writer in the *Retrospective Review*, vol. 9, committed a mistake in supposing this to be the first edition. Whitney declares the contrary in his preface. "And also I have written some of the Emblems to certain of my friends, * * * which both were wanting in my first edition, and are now added hereunto."

writings and misfortunes has been given in the *Harleian Miscellany*.

To return to Wither. The origin of the work is thus related in the preface:—"These Emblems, graven in copper, by Crispinus Passoeus (with a motto in Greek, Latin, or Italian, round about every figure, and with two lines or verses in one of the same languages paraphrasing those mottoes), came into my hands almost twenty years past. The verses were so mean that they were afterwards cut off from the plates; yet the workmanship being judged very good for the most part, and the rest excusable, some of my friends were so much delighted in the graver's art, and in those illustrations which, for my own pleasure, I had made upon some few of them, that they requested me to moralize the rest, which I condescended unto, and they had been brought to view many years ago, but that the copper-prints (which are now gotten) could not be procured out of Holland upon any reasonable terms."

These prints, in their original state, as published by John Janson, at Arnheim, are said to have possessed considerable merit*. The illustrations alluded to by Wither were written by Gabriel Rollenhagenius, in Latin verse, and are often incorrect: in one place *et* is made long before *hostes*, an error in prosody not very creditable to a gentleman in his 27th year.

The *Emblems* are dedicated to Charles the First and his Queen, in a strain of flattery and adulation. The writer's reflections could not have been very agreeable if, in after-times, he cast his eyes over this "Epistle Dedicatory," in which he celebrates the virtues of the

* Beloe's *Anecdotes of Literature*, vol. 2, p. 246.

monarch, the wealth and tranquillity of the people, and prophesied

A chaste, a pious, and a prosperous age.

Throughout the Emblems, Wither shows himself a warm and steady supporter of the Monarchy and the Church. In the fifteenth illustration of the second book, he ridicules the puritanical sanctity of the times, and inveighs against those who fancied that they brought sincere "oblations to God," when they "roared out imprecations" against all whom they esteemed wicked, and others who sought to obtain their requests,

By praying long, and repetitions vain*.

And underneath the picture of the Crown and Sceptre he wrote,

Grant, Lord, these isles for ever may be blest
With what in this our emblem is exprest.

He alludes to the gathering of sectarian dissatisfaction, but it is only to pray that the goodness and patience of the Sovereign may, by the grace of God, "make up a blessed concord." Then, indeed, the poet could return thanks to heaven, that while his fathers had been obliged to worship "in private and obscured rooms," he lived in an age when the "sounds of gladness" were heard every day in "the goodly temples." And when, with something of true prophetic vision, he declared that men were already beginning to *wantonize*

* And in the 25th illustration of the first book, when speaking of true devotion,—

Nor is it up and down the land to seek,
To find those well-breath'd lecturers that can
Preach thrice a Sabbath, and six times a week,
Yet be as fresh as when they first began.

The reader may, perhaps, remember the eloquent South's invective against "the copious flow and cant" of the fanatics.

(a most happy expression) in matters of religion, and let "that loathing in" which made the manna tasteless; even then he could entreat the Almighty to prolong his mercy, and to watch over the fruit in the vineyard, that the Light of Grace might not be displaced from "the Golden Candlestick." He was still a frequenter of the Church, and an humble follower of her ordinances. How melancholy a change was to be wrought in a few years! In 1646 he discovered that all the misery of the country had been produced by the Church, that she was the source of all the "late troubles," that her "avarice and pride" first divided the island, and that from her

— At first the firebrands came
That set this empire in a flame*.

The poet was now reduced to considerable poverty†. The *Hymns and Songs of the Church*, far from enriching his estate, had impoverished it considerably more than three hundred pounds, and "impartial death and wasting time," he complained, had removed those friends from whom he might have asked a favour with a certainty of obtaining it. He might well turn over, with a sad and desolate heart, the leaves of the Thankful Register, in which were recorded the names of his noble patrons. Among them death had, indeed, been busy. The Duke of Richmond‡; the father of Henry Earl of Holland, who, as the poet gratefully remembered, had sought him out in poverty and obscurity to protect

* *What Peace for the Wicked.*

† The allusion to the fallen fortunes of his family is not without dignity:
I never yet did murmuringly complain,
Although those moons have long been on the wane,
Which on their silver shields my elders wore,
In battles, and in triumphs heretofore.—*Illust.* 48, book 3.

‡ Uncle of James Duke of Lennox.

and succour him ; William, the accomplished and generous Earl of Pembroke, and many more, had gradually fallen away from his side. Sorrow, if not always the mother of virtue, is frequently its nurse ; and the loss of his friends probably contributed to impart the contemplative and melancholy spirit which pervades the Emblems. Many specimens might be selected, beautifully descriptive of the calm and religious sentiments of the writer ; but the following extract from the 35th illustration of the Second Book is the only one to which I can afford insertion. The Emblem represents a flame upon a mountain, driven to and fro by the tempestuous and angry winds, yet continually gathering strength and brightness, in spite of every opposition.

Thus fares the man whom Virtue, beacon-like
Hath fix'd upon the hills of eminence ;
At him the tempests of mad Envy strike,
And rage against his piles of innocence.
But still the more they wrong him, and the more
They seek to keep his worth from being known,
They daily make it greater than before,
And cause his fame the further to be blown.
When, therefore, no self-doting arrogance
But virtues, covered with a modest veil,
Break through obscurity, and thee advance
To place where Envy shall thy worth assail,
Discourage not thyself, but stand the shocks
Of Wrath and Fury. Let them snarl and bite,
Pursue thee with detraction, slander, mocks,
And all the venom'd engines of despight.—
Thou art above their malice, and the blaze
Of thy celestial fire shall shine so clear,
That their besotted souls thou shalt amaze,
And make thy splendours to their shame appear.

How many hundred times has the thought in this

poem been expressed by later writers, and by which of the number has it been uttered with equal majesty !

We may say of the Emblems generally, that they form a very pleasant and interesting work, at once instructive and entertaining. Wither always despised those "verbal conceits which serve to little other purpose but for witty men to show tricks one to another," but he never for a moment desired to banish out of the world all elegancies of speech, though not in themselves useful ; for that he considered "as absurd as to root out all herbs unfit to make pottage, or to destroy all flowers less beautiful than the tulip, or less sweet than the rose." With a hope of blending amusement with graver thoughts, he also disposed the Emblems into Lotteries*.

Appended to the volume is a "Supersedeas" to all "them whose custom it is, without any deserving, to importune authors to give unto them their books." The poet complains of having been a considerable sufferer from persons of this description, who no sooner saw a book in his possession, than they thought themselves entitled to "ask and take." In this way he had already lost "nearly five hundred crowns," and he declares his determination to give no more books for the future to any but his intimate friends, unless those individuals, who were so anxious to obtain them gratuitously, would allow him to inspect their property, and "ask and take" in a similar manner. It is not likely, after this hint, that he experienced any more annoyances.

Soon after the publication of the Emblems, Wither

* He did this, however, not so much to satisfy his own judgment, as to advance the profit of the stationers, who had ventured a considerable sum of money upon the "many costly sculptures."

seems to have settled himself near Farnham in Surrey, in a "cottage under the Beacon-Hill." But though he confined himself to his "rustic habitation in that part of the kingdom which is famous for the best of those meats wherewith the poet Martial invited his friends*," he did not forget "the delicates of the Muses," and on the 23rd of May, 1636, he dedicated to the celebrated Selden a translation of Nemesius' *Treatise upon the Nature of Man*. Wither had long loved the person, and honoured the worth, of his "noble friend," and gratefully remembered the great scholar's early attentions. "You have not," he says, in the epistle, "been precious to me without a cause; for I, being one of those who preposterously begin to write before they learn, you might justly enough have reputed me worthy of contempt only, when I was first presented to your acquaintance. Nevertheless, (perceiving, it may be, that the affections of my heart were sound, though the fruits of my brain were defective,) you vouchsafed me a friendly and a frequent familiarity; whereby I got opportunities both to rectify my judgment, and increase my understanding in many things."

Of the acquaintance of Selden, the most learned linguist and antiquarian of the age, Wither might well be proud. Selden's intimate friendship and kindly sympathy towards the poets of the day, are beautiful traits in his character. He had a heart equally open to the pastoral sweetness of William Browne, and the learned visions of Ben Jonson, as to the more dear and familiar studies of Spelman, of Camden, and of Cotton. He did not realize the observation of Livy, that by long meditation upon antiquity the mind itself becomes antique. Lord

* *Pallens faba, cum rubenti lardo.*

Clarendon, in this case no partial witness, said that "his humanity, courtesy, and affability, were such that he would have been thought to have been bred in the best Courts." Selden was also something of a rhymers, and Sir John Suckling introduced him in the *Session of the Poets*, but his metrical talents were chiefly employed in recommending the works of his friends. From so numerous a body of associates he must have experienced frequent interruption; and Aubrey informs us that he had a slight stuff, or silk kind of false carpet, to cast over the table where his papers lay when a stranger came in, so that he "needed not to displace his books or papers."

Wither's version was not made from the original, but from the Latin translations of N. Ellebodius and G. Valla, and though not strictly literal, embodies the sense of the author with considerable force and perspicuity.

The treatise *Περὶ Φυσεως Ανθρωπου* (Of the Nature of Man) is styled by Brucker, with some exaggeration, one of the most elegant specimens of the philosophy of the primitive Christians. Respecting Nemesius himself, considerable difficulty exists; but that he flourished in the age of Nazianzen is probable, because he dwells particularly upon the Schismatics who then agitated the Church, the Manichees, the Apollinarists, and the Eunomians, and cites only those writers who lived before the termination of the fourth century. From the style and manner of the book we are also assured that its author belonged to the period when the expiring Ethnic Philosophy put forth her still powerful, though weakened, efforts, under the guidance of Iamblichus, Plotinus, and Porphyry; efforts nobly repelled by Athanasius, Basil, and Nazianzen*.

* See Preface to the Oxford edition of the *Περὶ Φυσεως Ανθρωπου*, &c.

Our poet's restlessness would not permit him to become a "mere Corydon." In 1639 he was Captain of Horse in the expedition against the Scots, and Quarter-Master of his regiment under the Earl of Arundel. His patron, Robert, Earl of Essex, was Lieutenant-General of Infantry in the same army. The troops were, however, soon disbanded, and the poet returned for another season to more peaceful and congenial occupations.

In 1641 appeared the *Haleluiah, or Britain's Second Remembrancer*, a collection of Sacred Poems composed, we are told by the author, "in a three-fold volume." The first containing "hymns occasional; the second, hymns temporary; the third, hymns personal." This book, now as scarce as the first Remembrancer is common, I have not seen; but copious extracts have been given from it, by Wither himself, in the *Fragmenta Prophetica*; by Sir Egerton Brydges, in the *Censura Literaria*; and by Mr. Dalrymple, in his selections from the *Juvenilia*. The enthusiastic terms in which the latter gentleman eulogizes the *Haleluiah*, are scarcely supported by the specimens adduced. The Hymns were originally written and collected with the praiseworthy object of making those "vain songs less delighted in," which were then becoming so numerous that pious meditations were "nigh quite out of fashion." But the "carnal profaneness" of some, and the religious sullenness of others, rendered the poet's endeavours of little effect. He relates, however, one anecdote respecting them, too interesting to be omitted. One of his friends, highly approving of the attempt, distributed many copies of the collection at his own expense, and among others to a "person of quality" associated with the pleasures and fashion of the age. Though received at first with con-

tempt, the work, as Wither subsequently understood, produced a most beneficial change in the feelings and life of the individual.

The poet's devoted attachment to his own wife may have suggested the sentiments of the poem for *Anniversary Marriage Days*:—

Lord, living here are we
 As fast united yet,
 As when our hands and hearts by Thee
 Together first were knit.
 And in a thankful song
 Now sing we will Thy praise,
 For that Thou dost as well prolong
 Our loving, as our days.

The frowardness that springs
 From our corrupted kind,
 Or from those troublous outward things,
 Which may distract the mind ;
 Permit not Thou, O Lord,
 Our constant love to shake ;
 Or to disturb our true accord,
 Or make our hearts to ache.

The 37th Hymn, part 3—"For a Widower, or a Widow, deprived of a loving yoke-fellow," deserves to be quoted entire. The simple pathos of this stanza will be felt by every heart:—

The voice which I did more esteem
 Than music in her sweetest key :
 Those eyes which unto me did seem
 More comfortable than the day :
 Those now by me, as they have been,
 Shall never more be heard or seen :
 But what I once enjoyed in them,
 Shall seem hereafter as a dream.

“For an Anniversary Funeral Day,” and “An Occasional Hymn when we first awake in the Morning,” are also very graceful and pleasing compositions. Pope, it is not improbable, had the following verses from the Sunday Hymn in his recollection when he composed his Universal Prayer:—

Discretion grant me so to know
 What Sabbath-rites Thou dost require,
 And grace my duty so to do,
 That I may keep Thy law entire.
 Not doing what should not be done,
 Nor ought omitting fit to do.

With the *Haleluiah*, the poetical life of Wither may be considered to have terminated. He ceased to gaze “on such sights as youthful poets dream,” and his remaining years were worn out in petulant complaints, in penury, and in sorrow. He continued, indeed, to pour out his rhymes upon every occasion with a fertility age could not exhaust, and a perseverance no peril could restrain; but the sweetness of his Shepherd’s Pipe was lost for ever. Poetry fled from the discordant din of politics and fanaticism to “pitch her tent” in some more peaceful spot; and if she ever revisited the scenes she had left, it was under a cloud, pervious only to the eyes of her few remaining followers. Gladly would I pass over this dreary period of our poet’s history; a period of surpassing grief and agony to many, of turbulence and disquiet to all. But it was Wither’s evil fortune to be actively engaged in the earlier part of the civil war, and the biographer is obliged to follow him through the sad narrative of that stormy epoch.

Dr. Heylin, in his *History of the Presbyterians*, tells a story of Wither’s conduct at this time, so indicative of

profane and sacrilegious impiety, that I confess myself unable to give it credit. Heylin says, "that Martin, then member for Berks, having commanded the Sub-dean of Westminster to bring him to the place where the Regalia were kept, made himself master of the spoil; and, having forced open a great iron chest, took out the crown, the robes, the swords, and sceptre, belonging anciently to King Edward the Confessor, and used by all our kings at their inaugurations, with a scorn greater than his lusts and the rest of his vices, he openly declares that there would be no further use of these toys and trifles, and in the folly of that humour invests George Withers (an old Puritan Satyrist) in the royal habiliments, who, being thus crowned and royally arrayed (as right well became him), first marched about the room with a stately garb, and afterwards, with a thousand apish and ridiculous action exposed these sacred ornaments to contempt and laughter. Had the *Abuse* been *Stript and Whipt*, as it should have been, the foolish fellow might have passed for a prophet, though he could not be reckoned for a poet*."

Heylin, though an upright and bold-spirited man, was a most intemperate and prejudiced writer. Educated under a zealous Puritan, Mr. Neubury, he was, nevertheless, a most intolerant enemy of the sect. The *History of the Presbyterians*, it should also be remembered, was written under circumstances tending to deepen every feeling of animosity. The destruction of his incomparable library, the loss of his preferment, and the untimely death of his friend and patron, Archbishop Laud, were sufficient to arouse all the bitterness of his nature. It is not impossible that during Heylin's resi-

* *Hist. of Presb.* p. 452., ed. 1672.

dence at his living at Arlesford, which was almost immediately adjoining the birth-place of Wither, some cause of dissension might have arisen between the poet and himself.

The acquaintance of the profligate Harry Martin, as he was usually called, could confer no honour upon any man; yet even in his case, the injustice of party-spirit may have blinded the observer's eyes to the good qualities he really possessed. His character, as drawn by Aubrey, who says that he was "not at all covetous, humble, and always ready in the house to take the part of the oppressed," cannot be reconciled with the monster-ym under which he is generally portrayed.

Upon the first breaking out of the war, Wither is said, by Anthony Wood, to have sold his estate, and raised a regiment for the service of the Parliament. This account, which has been adopted by all subsequent writers, even including Brydges and Park, is at variance with the truth. Wither rarely withheld from an expression of his own deserts and sacrifices, and he says, in the *Field Musings*, when speaking of the cause of the Parliament,

According to my fortune and my place,
I therefore further'd it.

And again in the same page,

Where I then lived, I was the first of those
Who did contribute to my country's aid.—P. 5.

If he had sold his estate, he would have taken care to inform the public of the circumstance.

Having been appointed commander of the troop raised in his neighbourhood, Wither's first employment was to march into Kent, in "order to secure the malignants

there from attempting any thing against the
 These are the words of a very violent and scornful
 pamphlet, in which the poet's military and private
 character is attacked with a bitterness of hostility sufficient
 to invalidate the writer's claim to truth or correctness.
 Wither's quarters were at Maidstone, and that he discharged
 his new duties with no small activity is proved by the following
 resolution from the Journal of the House of Commons, January 5,
 1642. "Whereas the county of Kent hath advanced several sums
 of money upon the propositions, which they have sent to the
 Treasurers in Guildhall, London, and have this day also
 delivered in plate amounting to good value to the Treasurers
 aforesaid. It is this day ordered by the Commons House of
 Parliament, that three hundred and twenty-eight pounds
 six shillings be forthwith imprest by the said treasurers to
 the Committees of Kent, or any two of them, towards the
 payment of the arrears due to Captain Wither's troop,
 now residing in that county."

During his sojourn in Kent, according to the libellous
 pamphleteer already noticed, Wither did not forget his
 farm in Surrey, and selected for his own use some "brave
 horses" from the property of the Royalists. This accusation
 is in some measure corroborated by the testimony of another
 writer, professing to entertain an exalted opinion of the poet's
 "spiritual irradiations," but at the same time charging him
 with having executed some things in the county of Kent
 "beyond the sense" of the sentiments expressed in
Britain's Remembrancer. In those days of mental fever,
 the best men must have frequently erred; and the stubborn,
 though honest poet, was not likely to be more immaculate
 than his companions.

Wither did not continue many months in Kent. In October, 1642, he was appointed Governor of Farnham Castle, in Surrey, which had been recently occupied for the King by Sir John Denham. The military skill of the rival poets seems to have been equal, but Wither attempted to cast the odium resulting from his desertion of the place upon his employers, who neglected to supply him with the means of defence. Finding the popular feeling still against him, in the early spring of 1643 he put forth *A Shield and Shaft against Detraction*, and pronounced every person who accused him of acting in a manner derogatory to the character of a gentleman, "a fool, a coward, a villain, or all." During the civil war, hard words were dealt as freely as hard blows, and the poet was not singular in the energy of his style. We shall find a greater far, even Milton, indulging his anger in a similar strain.

Wither, who, according to his own account, was the first in Surrey who had taken arms for the Parliament, was also the first who suffered in its behalf. His farm at Wanborough, a village about four miles from Guildford, was plundered by the royalists. Edward Browne, in his *Pathetical Apology for Book-making*, dated from London, in December, 1642, says, "Captain George Wither hath my certificate, but I fear he is so perplexed because his house near Guildford, in Surry, was plundered by the king's cavaliers, that he can find no spare time to sign it." This event took place, it is probable, towards the beginning of January, 1642, for we discover from the Journals of the House of Commons that an order from the Committee of Safety for immediate payment to Wither of 328*l.* 6*s.* out of the coinage of plate, was issued, January 6, 1642.

He estimated his loss at 2000*l.*, and several attestations upon oath were laid before the Parliament verifying this statement. Few poets have possessed a dwelling so richly stored with provisions of every description. He enumerates, among other articles, a thousand weight of cheese, nearly eight hundred-weight of butter, six or seven hogsheads of beer and cider, of the whole of which the house was entirely pillaged. Having obtained the order of Parliament to indemnify himself upon the property of his plunderers*, one of whom was the poet Denham, then high-sheriff of the county, he lost no time in seizing upon the goods of "Master Denham and Master Tichborne."

Both of these estates, however, were at the time untenanted, and the "goods which were Master Denham's," were, by an order of some sequestrators, taken out of Wither's hands, and put into the possession of Denham's wife, who, "as do many other delinquents," the poet indignantly complained, found much more favour than he "did who had been ever faithful to the State." "For when my wife and children," he continues, "had been cruelly driven out of their habitation, and robbed of all

* Journal of the House of Commons, February 9, 1642. Whereas, Mr. Denham, High Sheriff of the County of Surrey, Captain Hudson, Captain Brednoxe, Mr. Jo. Tichborne, and others, did, in a hostile manner, enter into the house and grounds of Captain George Wither, and did from thence carry and take away all his books and writings, with his goods and household-stuff, cattle, sheep, corn, and hay, and his teams, to the value of at least 2000*l.*, as appeareth by an inventory of the particulars taken and estimated by his neighbours and others. It is therefore, this day ordered, by the Commons' House of Parliament, that the said Captain George Wither, be authorized by this House to repair himself for his said losses out of the estates of the said Sheriff and Captains, and such other persons who were accessory unto, or actually spoilers and plunderers of the estate of the said Captain Wither; or out of the goods and estates of such persons that are actually in arms against the Parliament. And that wheresoever the said Captain Wither doth find any of the goods or estates belonging to any of the said persons aforesaid, that he do seize the same and take it into his custody for his relief, as aforesaid.

they had, by her husband and his confederates, and when, by virtue of the forementioned order, I justly entered upon the house of the said Denham, purposing to harbour my said wife and children therein, Mistress Denham, having long before deserted the house, and left there only some tables, with such-like household-stuff, was, upon false suggestions, put again, by order, into possession of the house, because, as her charitable patron alleged, she was a gentlewoman, big with child, and had a fancy to the place*.”

Aubrey has given a rambling account of this occurrence. “In the time of the civil war, Geo. Withers, the poet, begged Sir John Denham’s estate of the Parliament, in whose cause he was a captain of horse. It happened that G. W. was taken prisoner, and was in danger of his life, having written severely against the king. Sir John Denham went to the king, and desired his Majesty not to hang him, for that while G. W. lived, he should not be the worst poet in England†.” It seems likely that our poet’s captivity took place after the battle of Edge-hill, on the 23rd of October, 1642, for we learn from Clarendon, that a very considerable number of the Parliament’s cavalry officers were taken after that engagement‡.

A similar act of malicious kindness was performed by Henry Martin, when he saved the life of Sir William

* “Ordered that the humble petition of Anne, the wife of John Denham, Esq., be referred to the examination of the Committee of this House for sequestration, or any three of them; and that in the mean time they shall have full power to deliver unto her child-bed linen and such other necessities as they shall see fit.”—Journals of the House of Commons, 11th May, 1643.

† M. Lefevre-Couchy, the writer of the article on Wither in the *Biographie Universelle*, remarks on this anecdote, with pleasing simplicity, Wither *ne fut donc pas pendu*.

‡ *History of the Rebellion*, 4to. ed., Oxford, vol. ii, pt. 1, p. 77.

Davenant ; but in Denham's request there was a bitterness which spoke of the lost fields at Egham. The name of Denham frequently recurs in the life of Wither. At this time his talents were not in much repute, although the *Sophy*, which gave rise to Waller's witty saying, that he broke out, like the Irish rebellion, three-score thousand strong, when nobody suspected it, was published in 1642*, and, according to Aubrey, "did take extremely." Soon after the battle of Edge-hill, his well-known poem of *Cooper's Hill* is said to have been printed at Oxford, "on a sort of brown paper, for there they could get no better." But this story, which has been always unhesitatingly credited, is not reconcileable with the fact of an edition of the poem having been published in London, by Thomas Walkley, in August, 1642.

The poetical fortune of Denham forms a singular contrast to that of his rival. While Wither has been long forgotten, except by a few students of our old poetry, the works of Denham have been carefully collected, and his life written by one who touched nothing he did not adorn. Yet Johnson, it must be confessed, was too favourable in his estimate of the poet's genius ; his claim to the invention of a species of poetry, to which the great critic has applied the name of *local*, seems to be purely imaginary. *Cooper's Hill* has nothing about it local, but the name†. Wither and Browne furnished specimens far more individually descriptive than any

* Aubrey says it came out in 1640. I suppose he meant it was acted in that year.

† The four lines, which since their commendation by Dryden, have been so often celebrated, are not found in the first London edition of *Cooper's Hill*. They stand thus:—

O could my verse freely and smoothly run
As thy pure flood, heaven should no longer know
Her old Eridanus ; thy purer stream
Should bathe the gods, and be the poet's theme.

thing in Denham. Pope formed a truer estimate of his merits, when he styled him "Majestic Denham," an appellation to which the occasional dignity of his manner, particularly in the Lines upon the Earl of Strafford, fully entitled him. In more peaceful times his Muse might have given utterance to a grander strain. The happier efforts of his pen are still remembered with pleasure, and the portrait left of him by his friend Aubrey, places the poet before us in an interesting light. "He was of the tallest, but a little incurveting at his shoulders, not very robust. His hair was but thin and flaxen, with a moist curl. * * * His eye a kind of light goose grey, not big, but it had a strange piercingness, not as to shining and glory (but like a Momus) when he conversed with you, he looked into your very thoughts."

On the 25th of July, 1643, the House of Commons directed the knights and burgesses of Middlesex and Surrey to summon Wither before them, and inquire what money or goods he had received upon the Orders of the 9th of February, and from whom, and what lands he possessed.

The loss of his property, and the interruption of his agricultural occupations involved him in great distress; he was fined and imprisoned, and on him was "laid the censure" merited by others. Nothing remained for his support but "the poor household furniture within his door." His friends forsook him as "a faulty man," and his enemies grew bold and insolent in proportion. His afflictions cannot be told more touchingly than in his own narrative:—

To add yet further to my great afflictions,
 God with a sickness (spreading forth infections)
 Visits my house, and drove all those from thence
 Who were some comfort to my indigence.

My children were all sick of that disease,
Their single keeper, to her little ease,
Was their poor mother ; whilst, as sad as she,
I thought whereby they might supported be,
And we who served were awhile before,
With sixteen household servants, sometimes more,
Had then but one boy, who sick also lay,
And one poor woman hired by the day.

Westrow Revived, 1653.

To support his family, he had already disposed of his plate, and his wife had “ript away” the silver and the “lace of gold” from her garments, and exchanged her ornaments for daily bread. Even the dishes that held their meat were also sold ; and last of all they parted with the “precious stones, the jewels, and the rings,” which had been given to them as “tokens of respect” from various distinguished persons. In this melancholy condition, yet still relying upon the Divine Providence, Wither says that he walked out and met his friend Mr. Westrow, who, touched by his calamities, presented him with twenty pounds. Westrow’s charity did not relax ; the twenty pounds gradually grew to “twenty hundred crowns and more,” which he advanced without desiring a bond, or bill, or note

To testify the lending of one groat:

And when Wither sent a full acknowledgement of all he had received, Westrow returned it to him, with an injunction that he should tell no man of the transactions between them. By this seasonable help he was enabled to recover some money detained from him “in a private hand,” and he carried something to his friend every year in liquidation of the debt*.

* In 1659 Wither had not forgotten his friend. “When I was much poorer than at present I am, God raised me up a friend, who, knowing

Westrow died in 1653, and Wither honoured his memory with a poem, apparently inspired by unfeigned gratitude and esteem. Walker, in his *History of Independency*, has not left so favourable a picture of this individual; he numbers him with those persons who had enriched themselves from poverty and a low degree, and says he was worth nothing until he became “a captain and a parliament man, when he got the Bishop of Worcester’s manor of Hartlerow, which proved he had two good and beneficial offices*.” Wither indignantly repelled this accusation against his friend, and represents him as one who,

Living, walk’d upright in crooked ways,
And chose the best part in the worst of days.

Lord Essex also endeavoured to alleviate the poet’s distresses. On the 12th of September, 1643, he issued a warrant for immediate payment of 287*l.* 12*s.*, and on the 13th of the same month another warrant for the further sum of 294*l.*; and on the 3rd of March in the following year, for the like payment of 190*l.*†

Wither lent the cause he had adopted the aid of his pen as well as his sword. About the first year after the commencement of the war, he wrote the *Mercurius Rusticus*, a country messenger, in imitation of the Weekly Intelligencers. The newspapers published during the civil war have long since passed into the collections of antiquarians, and are become almost inaccessible even

by what means I was necessitated (and how unlikely I was to repay him), brought nevertheless unto me without my asking ought (without obliging by a note under my hand, and without so much as requiring a promise of repayment), 500*l.*, by parcels at several times during the continuance of my wants.”—*Epistolium-Vagum Prosa-Metricum*, p. 5.

* Walker’s *History of Independency*, p. 171, ed. 1660.

† Recited in the report of Colonel Dove’s Committee, to which Wither’s claims were referred.—Journal of the House of Commons, January 2nd, 1650.

to the scholar. The witty Cleveland called the diurnals of that day, a history in sippets. So much brutality of insolence and cruelty of invective could only have been endured in a season of universal anarchy and confusion. The severity of the Royalists was, however, in some measure, redeemed by a vein of learning and wit. Wither touches pleasantly upon some of the most popular papers of the time. "Though I am not so witty as my friend Britannicus, nor bring you narratives that so well deserve the whetstone as Monsieur Aulicus*, nor come so furnished with novelties as Master Civicus, nor so supplied with passages as the *Weekly Intelligencer*, nor am at leisure to sum up occurrences as the *Accomptant*, &c. &c.;" he was afterwards ashamed of his periodical scribbling, and never renewed his visit, although he at first intimated his intention of doing so.

The next production of his soldier-pen was the *Campo-Musæ, or Field Musings*, written while he was "in

* Monsieur Aulicus was Sir John Birkenhead, the prose Butler of the day. He was first brought into notice by Archbishop Laud, whose favour he obtained by some beautiful transcriptions. Birkenhead was at this time a Servitor of Oriel College, but Laud recommended him to a Fellowship at All Souls. When Charles the First held his Court at Oxford, Birkenhead was selected to write the *Mercurius Aulicus*, which he writ wittily enough, says Aubrey, until the surrender of the town in 1646. But this is not strictly true. During a considerable period the paper was written by Dr. Peter Heylin, though not with equal humour or spirit. Wither was the frequent object of Birkenhead's ridicule. In a highly-amusing pamphlet, entitled *Two Centuries of Paul's Church-yard*, in which the Libri Theologici, Politici, Historici, &c. are divided into classes, we find in the third class, among other interesting announcements, the following: *Aristotle's Works in English Metre, by George Wither*, Wither was never attacked with impunity; and in the *Great Assizes holden in Parnassus*, published in 1643, and ascribed to his pen, Sir John Birkenhead is severely handled.

The reader will find a full and interesting notice of the newspapers printed during the civil war, in the *British Bibliographer*, vol. i., p. 513; Appendix to Chalmers's *Life of Ruddiman*, and the Introduction to *Cromwelliana*.

Aubrey, after describing Birkenhead "of middling stature and great goggle eyes," adds, rather needlessly, that he was not of a "sweet aspect."

arms for the King and Parliament." The king and the parliament was a phrase constantly in the mouth of the republicans, even while they were using every means to overthrow the monarchy. Through the *Field Musings* are scattered several interesting anecdotes of the writer's military life. His colonel, he tells us, was Middleton, a valiant Scot, on whose left flank he led his own troop to the charge*. His fare and lodging were of the true martial kind; he had the open fields for his quarters, and was very happy to make a comfortable bed in a "well-made barley-cock," with the starry sky for his canopy and curtains. Yet even here, amid the din and tumult of arms, he prophesied the fall of nations, and prepared for publication his own views of the Bible, and the mysteries of the Apocalypse.

But Wither's tergiversation did not pass unnoticed: an opponent rose up in the person of the Water-poet. Honest John Taylor was now at Oxford, whither he had fled from the persecutions of his enemies in London; and he tells us, in that strange but amusing medley, *Mad verse, Sad verse, Glad verse, and Bad verse*, that upon his arrival at Oxford, he found the king and a large party of nobility in "Christ Church garden," and that the monarch, on perceiving him, immediately came towards him, and "put forth his royal hand strait," which, says Taylor, with no small exultation,

On my knees I humbly kneel'd and kist.

This mark of the king's favour lent a fresh vigour to his feelings, and he applied the lash with an unsparing

* A description of the poet's flag is given by Prestwich in his *Res-Publica*, p. 35. Captain George Withers, the poet—*gules*; in *saltier* a sword bladed *proper*, hilted *or*; over which a golden pen; over both in *fess*, a scroll, and thereon *Pro-Rege, Lege, Grege*,—fringed *argent* and *gules*. See also p. 94

hand to the political dereliction of his former friend. He entitled his reply to the *Campo-Musæ, Aqua Musæ, or Cacofago, Cacodæmon, Captain George Wither wrung in the Withers* *. The contents of the poem are not more euphonious than the title. In the preface he declares, that he had loved and respected Wither thirty-five years, because he thought him "simply honest," and takes leave of him in a strain of no common malevolence and scorn. The Skuller, as Ben Jonson called him, possessed a vocabulary rich in epithets of abuse.

If Wither's narrative be true, and of his veracity no doubt can be fairly entertained, he was at this period esteemed a person of considerable political influence. In the *Cordial Confection* he tells the following singular anecdote:—That during the King's residence at Oxford, he received two letters from Lord Butler, which, at the time of writing the *Confection*, in 1659, were still preserved among his papers, offering to settle half of his estate upon the poet, only as a small earnest of greater rewards from Charles himself, if he would embrace the royal cause †. This offer was rejected. Of Lord Butler I know nothing. Butler was the family name of the Marquis of Ormond, whose devotion to his royal master has been commemorated by Clarendon and Burnet. But he could not have been at Oxford, and his son Thomas, Earl of Ossory, was only a boy.

* Printed at Oxford, in 1644. The author of the *Aqua-Musæ* was not altogether free from the charge of fickleness. Of Wither's *Motto*, which we have before seen him praising as a "better book," he now said,

And in his *Motto* did with brags declare,
That in himself all virtues perfect were.

Taylor had not forgotten his alienated friend in 1645. In the *Rebells Anathematized*, &c., published in that year, he speaks of

Wither, that dainty darling of the dolts.

† I was invited to that side by two letters from the Lord Butler, which I think are yet among my papers.—*Cordial Confection*, p. 32.

Before the publication of the *Field-Musings*, Wither had disbanded his troop; his reasons are briefly given in the *Nil Ultra*:—

But so divisions them enraged
Who were in that contest engaged,
And such ill consequents presaged,
That I my troop did soon disband;
And hopeless I should ought essay
Successful in a martial way,
My sword and arms quite flung away,
And took my pen again in hand.

He declared in “the speech without door,” delivered July 9, 1644, that he had served the republic in a military capacity while he had any thing to serve it with, and had kept his horses until they had “twice eaten out their heads.” A MS. note, in a contemporary hand-writing in the copy of the speech among the King’s pamphlets, says that the author was at the time Poet Laureat, a title never claimed or even mentioned by Wither himself.

Our poet did not again take up his sword. He had told Lord Essex in the dedication of the *Field-Musings*, that his pen would probably strengthen the Parliament army more than a regiment of horse; and he showed himself quite as active in one employment as he had been in the other. Polemical pens are rarely idle or exhausted. In the same year he addressed “Letters of Advice” to all the counties and corporations of England, particularly Southampton and Surrey, “touching the choice of Knights and Burgesses;” and in the following year he lifted up a “Voice of Peace,” tending, as he hoped, to the pacification of God’s wrath, and the healing of the wounded commonwealth. But they whose assistance

had contributed to raise the storm, possessed no power either to mitigate or allay it; and observers, like Wither, who expected the cloud would have dissolved in a little harmless lightning, turned away in doubt and fear from its threatening aspect. He waited for peace, but he waited in vain*.

He was himself soon to fall under the vindictive malice of the party with whom he had sided. At the close of 1645, or the beginning of 1646, he was ejected from the magistracy of Surrey, to which he had been appointed by the Long Parliament, principally, as he suspected, through the interest of Sir Richard Onslow and his friends, "who found it pertinent to the establishing their designs on the Government, that he should be put out of the commission." Wither did not often conceal his sentiments, whether of love or hatred, and he immediately retaliated on his enemy in a very bitter pamphlet, *Justiciarius Justificatus; or, The Justice Justified*, in which he vindicated his conduct in the execution of his duty, having, he declared, neither delayed nor perverted justice, "nor put any man to so much cost for it as the expense of one clerk's fee."

This attack enraged Onslow, and on the 10th of April, 1646, he complained of the pamphlet to the House of Commons; and Wither, who happened to be at the door, where his petitions caused him to be a frequent attendant, being called in, avowed himself the author. Upon this it was resolved, "That Mr. G. Wither be forthwith sent for as a delinquent by the Serjeant at Arms;" and having been brought in a second time, after he had "kneeled awhile," the Speaker informed him of the intention of the House to refer the consideration of the

* *Opopalsamum Anglicanum*, August, 1646.

pamphlet to the Committee of Examinations. On the 4th of May, Mr. Whittacre and some other members of that committee were directed to send for Wither, and to inquire into the truth of his allegations. The following extract from the Journal of the House of Commons for the 7th of August, 1646, will not be uninteresting:—

“Mr. Whittacre reports the state of the examinations concerning a pamphlet written and published by Mr. George Withers, intituled *Justiciarius Justificatus*; and concerning a practice informed of in Mr. Withers, and one Mr. Andrewes Burrell, of accusing Sir Richard Onslow that he sent monies to the King at Oxon; and the several examinations, and the instances and inferences out of them, were all read by the Reporter.

“The humble petition of George Wither was read, desiring further time to prove what he suggested in his book.

“Another humble petition of George Wither was read, expressing his sorrow for his error in transgressing against the privileges of this House.”

It having been resolved that the reflections upon Onslow in the *Justiciarius Justificatus* were unfounded, ‘false and scandalous,’ the question was “propounded, that Mr. George Wither should pay unto Sir Richard Onslow the sum of five hundred pounds for his damages.”

“The question being put, the House divided, and there appeared for the question 65; against it 54; leaving a majority of 11 in favour of the fine.

It was then resolved, “That the book called *Justiciarius Justificatus* shall be burned at Kingston upon Thames, and at Guildford, upon the market days there, by the Marshal attending the Committee at Kingston aforesaid.”

According to Wood, our poet was, at the time of this debate, in prison for the libel; and he afterwards asserted that he knew nothing of the impeachment until he was startled by the news of the conviction. The accusation, he says, in the *Fragmenta Prophetica*, was brought on early in the morning, but so many members "abominated what they perceived to be intended, that the whole day was spent, before the author's enemies could prevail against him." That he had many friends in the House is proved by the small majority; and it may be remarked that Lieutenant General Cromwell was "Teller for the Noe." After a confinement of nearly twelve months, he was released without "petitioning or mediation for it," and, we may conclude, without paying the fine.

His imprisonment neither taught him discretion, nor improved his fortunes.

Much of the disquiet which imbibited so many years of his life, was occasioned by the difficulty he experienced in obtaining compensation for the plunder of his estate by the Royalists, and the liquidation of the debt due to him from the Parliament. A great portion of his time was wasted in fruitless attendance upon various Committees. On one petition, he tells us, he bestowed two months; on another, ten; and on a third, a year and nine months. Milton, in a passage supposed to refer to his own sufferings, bitterly complained that the truest friends of the republic, after having afforded the aid of their labours and fortunes, were tossed from one Committee to another with petitions in their hands.

The various methods employed by Wither to attract the notice of Parliament were very ingenious. On the 12th of November, 1646, he placed an humble memoran-

dum in the hands of several members as they entered the House. It was in these words:—

Sir,

Mind your faithful servant ; for my need
Requires compassion, and deserveth heed.
Though I have many rivals at your door,
Vouchsafe me justice, and I'll ask no more.

His efforts were not altogether ineffectual. On the 15th of March, 1647, an order was agreed to by the Lords and Commons, for payment of 1800*l.* out of Discoveries at Haberdashers' Hall; and on the 22nd of the same month, a further order was made for the payment of 1681*l.* 15*s.* 8*d.* out of the Excise. Nothing, however, was gained by these orders, which do not seem to have been ever enforced, and the House was at length induced to appoint some "selected members" to provide him with a temporary employment until his claims could be adjusted. When he published his *Si Quis**, in 1648, he stood recommended to a situation of considerable value, which he does not appear to have obtained.

About this time, he says, when he was living upon the charity of friends, "God providentially, beyond his hope, enabled him to purchase a considerable estate, by means of their acting against him who thereby intended their own benefit and his ruin;" and the Parliament also sold him a Manor, worth 300*l.* per annum, in consideration of "his debt of 1600*l.* and more by him paid." I suppose the property alluded to belonged to the See of Win-

* Weaver, in his *Life and Death of Sir John Oldcastle*, says, "Set up a *Si Quis*, give intelligence." A *Si Quis* was formerly a term for what we now call a hand-bill.—*Brit. Bib.*, vol. i, p. 314.

I'll fix a *Si Quis* (or it may be mo)
Upon the postern gate before I go.

Wither's Perpetual Parliament, p. 72.

chester. Wither's purchases of church-lands are detailed in Gale's *History of Winchester Cathedral*:—

The Manor of North Walton, in Hampshire, sold to George Wither and Thomas Allen, July 5, 1648, for 96*l.* 13*s.* 6*d.*

The Manor of Bentley and Alverstock, and Borough of Gosport, sold to George Wither and Elizabeth his wife, for 1185*l.* 4*s.* 5½*d.*, September 25, 1648.

The Manor of Itchinswell and Northampton Farm, sold to Nicholas Love and George Wither, for 1756*l.* 9*s.* 1*d.*, September 28, 1648.

The Manor of Hantden, sold to George Wither for 3796*l.* 18*s.* 11*d.*, March 23, 1650.

Misfortunes still followed him: the "estate was lost again," and the Manor, after he had "enjoyed it awhile," was resold by the Parliament to a member of their own, who pretended to have a mortgage upon it, and the poet was ejected "by a Suit in Law," without any satisfaction for the loss of his purchase-money, and was even compelled to pay the expenses of the suit, with other charges, amounting to several hundred pounds.

His calls for relief, however, were not entirely disregarded. In 1649, a few members of Parliament, "without his seeking," endeavoured to provide him with some occupation in order to satisfy his "just demands," and he acknowledged their kindness in *A Thankful Retribution*. The office which they sought, unsuccessfully, to procure, seems to have been that of Register in the Court of Chancery. Instead of this, Park thinks he was appointed one of the Commissioners for levying assessments in Surrey, as appears from the Usurpation Acts of 1649-50. A gentleman of the name of Lloyd possessed a certificate, attested by Wither on the 10th of December, 1651, while acting under this Commission, and entitled, "The report of Colonel John Humphreys, and Major George Wither,

touching the demands and accounts of M. René Angier, made upon a reference to them by the Committee for the sale of the King's goods." M. Angier had been agent in France both for the King and the Parliament.

In 1649, the poet hailed the victory of General Jones in Dublin over the troops of the Marquis of Ormond, with a *Thank-Oblation*, which occupies six quarto pages. This ode of gratulation is alluded to in one of the periodicals of the day. "At Westminster they are very lazy, and have done very little more of public concernment; but as it appears, George Withers has been very much busied in composing a Hymn of Praises for their great achievement and victory against Ormond, which he presented most of the members with on Thursday last, in hopes they would have sung it the day after, being the thanksgiving day appointed*."

We have already seen that the orders made for Wither's relief were productive of no benefit to him, and on the 2nd of January, 1650, a Report upon his case was delivered to the House by Colonel Dove, from which it appeared that 3958*l.* 15*s.* 8*d.*, with interest, were then due. The Report recommended that for the 1681*l.* charged upon the Excise, eight per cent. should be paid every six months; and that for the remainder of the sum of 3958*l.* the Manor of Little Horksley, in Essex, should be settled on Wither and his heirs. This estate, which was valued by the sequestrators at a yearly rent of 240*l.*, formed a part of the inheritance of Sir John Denham, whom the Report calls the poet's "chief plunderer." Colonel Dove's suggestions were only partially adopted. The 1681*l.* were secured, according to the recommendation of the Report, upon the Excise; but

* *Mercurius Elencticus*, Monday, August 27, to September 3, 1649.

instead of the entire estate of Little Horksley, only 150*l.* was settled upon the poet in "full satisfaction and discharge of all demands," and Mr. Garland was ordered "to bring in an Act for that purpose."

Neither Wither's private troubles, nor his labours as a Commissioner, prevented him from occasionally observing the political world. Upon the rumour of an intention suddenly to dissolve the Parliament in September 1652, he immediately issued a *Timely Caution*, comprehended in seven double trimeters. The only classical portion of the pamphlet is the title.

He also employed some of the November nights of the same year in visionary schemes for remodelling the external and internal construction of the House of Commons. In the *Perpetual Parliament*, published April 24, 1653, he proposed to build a new House of Assembly at Whitehall, of a fair and imposing aspect, and beautified with walks and pleasant gardens. The members were to be arrayed in a senatorial robe or toga, wearing wreaths of gold around their necks, from which was to be suspended a tablet with the British Isles enamelled upon it. Annual Parliaments were to be introduced with a monthly election of Speaker: all undue influence in the return of members was to be punished with exile, and all cases of bribery in public offices, with death. A twelfth part of the representatives of England and Wales was to be chosen monthly, and for those in residence, a

Constant table of a meal a-day

was to be provided at a moderate charge. Every thing connected with the institution was to be pure, noble, and disinterested.

Wither's political dreams must be numbered with

the equally beautiful and fantastic visions of Milton and Cowley. Structures like these, raised in the tranquillity of an enthusiastic mind, can only retain their purity and lustre in the serene and unclouded atmosphere of truth and virtue.

With the *Perpetual Parliament* was printed the *Dark Lantern*. Finding the season to be one of considerable danger, he availed himself of his Lantern, which enabled him to walk out without being seen, and to afford light wherever he found it desired. About the same time he put into the hands of Cromwell a Declaration tending to the settlement of the Government. Of our poet's political intimacy with the Protector, a curious and interesting account is contained in the *Cordial Confection*. After alluding to the Declaration, he thus goes on with the narrative :—

“ This overture being made at a time when his fears and hazards were very great, though that *Discourse* was very large, he, with much seeming contentment, heard me read it over to the last word ; and then protested, according to his usual manner, that it answered to his heart as *the shadow of his face* in the glass (then hanging before him in the room) answered to his *face* ; and pretended that he would publish that Declaration, and act accordingly, as soon as he, with one in whose discretion he much confided, had considered what alteration it might need (or words to that effect), and then received it of me, promising to return it, with his final resolution, within a week.

“ At the week's end, or thereabout, he or Mr. Thurloe, then Secretary (who seemed also to approve thereof), delivered back unto me my papers, and the Protector's answer, which then was,—‘ That he himself, together

with the said *Secretary* and *myself*, would within a few days examine it over to see what *verbally* might require alteration, or what addition would be necessary; and that being done, he would then, without fail, make order for the publication thereof.' But afterwards he apostatized from that resolution, to his own disadvantage, and the occasion of what hath since befallen to the public detriment; yet pretended many months together a firm adherence to what he had seemingly resolved on, keeping me all that time in attendance; gave me the key of his closet at the end of the Shield Gallery in Whitehall (wherein his books and his papers lay) to retire unto when I came thither; carried me often to his own table; frequently discoursed with me concerning my proposal, and appointed many set days wherein to review the said *papers*, but failed always in performance; wherewith I, being a little discontented, told him I thought his mind was changed, and giving him back the key of his closet, purposed never to wait again upon him, in relation to that business. He then, with very respective words to me, excusing his delays, assured me that at six of the clock next morning, he would send for his Secretary and despatch that which he intended, before he would admit any other person into his presence. I came before the appointed hour, but was then also put off until a little past three in the afternoon; at which time I attended till past four, and then hearing that he and his Secretary were gone forth in a coach to take the air, I purposed to depart and lose no more time on that occasion; and as I was leaving the room, one informed me that about the same hour in which I was appointed to attend him and his Secretary, their necks were both in hazard to be broken by the Protector's usurping the office of his

coachman, and that they were both brought in so hurt, that their lives were in danger. • Of that imprudent, if not disgraceful, attempt, misbeseeing his person, I endeavoured to prevent as much dishonour as I might by a little poem, as I thought it my duty, in regard he executed the supreme office at that time.”

This little poem was the ‘*Vaticinium Casuale*, or a Rapture for the late Miraculous Deliverance of his Highness the Lord Protector from a desperate danger.’ The poet, who felt the ludicrous situation of his hero, attempted to elevate the dignity of the modern coachman by a comparison with the charioteer of the Olympic games. But his *Rapture* contained something more valuable than flattery. He did not hesitate to remind Cromwell of the nature of his office, and of the penalty which would hereafter be exacted for every act of injustice.

“After this,” continues Wither, “he (Cromwell) called on me again, as if his mind had not been wholly changed, and referred the said *Papers* to his Privy Council, who referred them to a *Sub-Committee*, of which Sir Gilbert Pickering being one, gave it a high approbation, and was pleased to say he did not flatter me; but from that time forward I heard no more of it. Another service I did, which much tended to *his* and the *public safety*, whereto Sir Gilbert Pickering is privy likewise; and in consideration of the fore-mentioned services, the said Protector, having without my asking that, or any thing else. (but to be relieved according to justice from my oppressions which I could not obtain) gave me the *Statute Office*, and afterwards made it of little worth unto me, because, as I conceive, I exprest my thankfulness for it by declaring unto him those truths which he was not willing to hear of.”

v. Sir Gilbert Pickering was one of the Protector's council, but he is remembered with more interest as the kinsman and early patron of Dryden. During Wither's frequent visits to the closet at Whitehall, and the table of Cromwell, it is not improbable that he may have met the illustrious Milton, who had been made Latin Secretary in the spring of 1649, and his connexion with Sir Gilbert Pickering was likely to introduce him into the society of Dryden. No mention of either, however, occurs in any of his works.

The poem called the *Protector*, published in 1655, in which Wither illustrated the dignity of the office, and, as he thought, "rationally" proved it the most honourable of all titles, contributed to awaken the gratitude of Cromwell. Of this poem, we discover from a MS. note, a second impression enlarged appeared in 1656, probably containing a tribute of thanks to Oliver for the appointment to the Statute Office. Of the nature of this situation I am not able to give any account; it was, I conclude, synonymous with the Record Office bestowed upon Prynne after the Restoration.

The titular distinction of the New Governor is known to have been the subject of frequent discussion; and Wither, on the 7th of October, 1657, attempted to clear up the difficulty by a *Suddain Flash*, showing why the style of Protector should be continued. Our poet was not the only offerer of this grateful incense. Waller had already hailed the elevation of the "Lord Protector" with what has been pronounced by Johnson, with little justice, his famous panegyric. Of the author of the *Rambler*, it is the writer's wish to speak with the respect due to his lofty intellect, his Christian philosophy, and his dignified morality; but from some of his poetical

decisions he may be pardoned for appealing. Waller has long enjoyed a prominent place among the British poets, to the exclusion of more deserving candidates. Prior had said, that Denham and Waller improved our versification, and Dryden perfected it; and subsequent critics have admitted the assertion without hesitation. Yet Wither showed a mastery over the language long before Denham or Waller had printed a line; and even from his most negligent works might be extracted lines equal, if not superior, to any thing in Waller's panegyric.

If we may credit Wood, the favour of Cromwell was not limited to the gift of the Statute Office. The ill-natured antiquary says, that he made the poet Major-General of all the horse and foot in the county of Surrey, in which employment "he licked his fingers sufficiently, gaining thereby a great odium from the generous loyalists." The institution of Major-Generals, and the division of England and Wales into districts immediately under their military jurisdiction, was a scheme worthy of the usurper. From the decrees of these martial judges there was no appeal. They sent whom they pleased to prison, says one of their founder's warmest admirers, and confined them where they pleased*. Among the victims of this oppressive regulation, was the celebrated Jeremy Taylor, who suffered a confinement of some months in Chepstow Castle. But Wood's statement respecting Wither is unfounded. If the poet "licked his fingers," it was not in the capacity of a Major-General. Colonel Kelsey was appointed Major-General of Kent and Surrey, and Colonel Goffe filled the same situation in Hampshire.

On the 3rd of September, 1658, Cromwell died, and

* Godwin's *History of the Commonwealth*, vol. iv., p. 242.

Wither composed a Private Meditation upon the occasion. Of this political Proteus many pictures have been drawn. He was the fortunate madman of Mazarine, the brave wicked man of Clarendon, the exhausted villain of Bishop Burnet; yet we ought to remember that Baxter, a shrewd and careful observer, thought he "meant honestly in the main, and was pious and conscientious" till prosperity and success corrupted him*. No man has been the subject of more flattery or abuse; with one party the throned king of the apostacy, with the other, the creature of infamy and pollution. He is said by his admirers to have esteemed men of learning, and to have expressed an inclination to hire the pen of Meric Casaubon to write his history, and to patronize Hobbes for the *Leviathan*. But the invitation to Casaubon could only prove that he was desirous of perpetuating his exploits in the most graceful manner. He wished to sit for his picture and direct the artist. His intellect was bold and vigorous, full of nerve and power, and peculiarly adapted to wrestle with the stormy influences of the age he lived in. Fickle and uncertain in his friendships and promises, he fostered hopes one hour, only to crush them in the next. Of his variableness an example has been already afforded in the case of our poet.

"On the demise of Cromwell," says Mr. T. Campbell, "Wither hailed the accession of Richard with joyful gratulation. He never but once in his life foreboded good, and in that prophecy he was mistaken." It is easier for a critic to be witty than correct. If Mr. Campbell had ever taken the trouble to look into Wither's political works, he would have seen the fallacy of the observation.

* *Reliquiæ Baxterianæ*, pt. i., p. 98.

On the expulsion of the Parliament by General Lambert, in the October of 1659, he lost no time in preparing *A Cordial Confection against the Fainting of the Heart* in those distracted times, which he printed on the 23rd of December, addressed to Mr. Robert Hamon, merchant. In the copy of this pamphlet in the British Museum, is the following observation written on a blank leaf, and dated January 6, 1660:—"This Libell was scattered about the streets that night those bloody villains intended their massacre in London, which was upon Sunday night, the 6th of January, 1660, being Twelfth Night." In this pamphlet Wither asserts, that during nine years' solicitation he had been unsuccessful in procuring the reading of one petition in Parliament; but I find, from the Journals of the House of Commons, that the "petitions of Colonel Cooke and George Withers" were ordered to be read on Monday morning, February the 21st, 1656. Whether they were actually read on that day does not appear.

During the unsettled events of 1659-60, he was enjoying a little repose in the retirement of Hambledon, from which place he dates his *Furor Poeticus*, on the 19th of February in that year*. There are two villages of this name, one in the county of Southampton, and the other near Godalming, in Surrey; the former must have been the poet's residence, for we learn from the *Epistle at Random*, that his family had been settled in Hampshire two years. The intentions of General Monk were then the subject of general anxiety. Pepys says in his *Diary*, "All the world is at a loss to think what Monk will do; the City saying he will be for them, and the Parliament

* In the *Advertisement*, at the end, he announces that any of his recent works may be had "of Mrs. Stamps, who selleth books in Westminster Hall."

saying he will be for them." Wither urged him to continue the steadfast champion of the Republic; how far he followed that advice is well known.

The *Furor Poeticus* obtained no relief for the petitioner. For nearly seventeen years had he been pouring out his complaints in public and in private, writing "many hundreds of poems, papers, and petitions," beside MS. addresses delivered into the hands of the two Protectors, and all with no more success than if he had supplicated "the Statues in Westminster Abbey, or Whitehall Garden." During this long and anxious season of hope deferred, the quiet beauty of his native hamlet frequently came back upon his heart, and he longed to dwell again "by the wood-side in a country village." He was, however, still engaged in agricultural pursuits, although prevented, by his occupation in London from visiting his farm more than two or three times in the year, and he expressed a fear, that owing to his increasing poverty, the land would soon be left unstocked.

His enemies appear to have been more active than his friends, having not only obtained the omission of his name in the Commission of the Peace for Hampshire, but in the Militia also; these were severe trials to the poet, now past his seventieth year, and, in his own words, worn out by oppression. After pathetically alluding to his depressed condition, and the want of sufficient funds to meet, with punctuality, the demands of his creditors, he continues:—

"To preserve myself as much as I could from this vexation and scandal, and to supply my personal wants (occasioned by other men deceiving my hopes), I have been enforced to sell away above 2000*l.* worth of my then remaining livelihood, real and personal, and am

still engaged, by my continuing oppressions, in almost as much more, though I have, since the sales last mentioned, sold by parcels, to the dismembering of my inheritance, all that was disengaged, and at my free disposal. Yea, the consumption goes on, insomuch that the remainder of the portion left in possession (unless part of that which is due to me may be paid to free it from incumbrance) is likely to be forfeited within a few months. And though forfeiture should be saved, my revenue will not be sufficient to discharge taxes and parochial payments with the interest of my remaining debts, and unavoidable expenses by them unusually occasioned, and afford a maintenance for myself, my wife, children, and servants (though a far less number than heretofore), after the rate of five shillings the week one person with another, throughout the year, to provide meat, drink, raiment, servants' wages, children's portions, and all other necessities in sickness and in health.

* * * And what is worse than all, I, whose credit was so good that when occasion heretofore required it, have borrowed 100*l.*, 200*l.*, 300*l.*, yea, 600*l.*, in one place for several years upon my single bond (as will yet appear by the bonds cancelled), am now doubtful whether my security will pass alone for 10*l.*"

So poor was he, indeed, that when he heard the intention of the Parliament to rate him at two horses for the service of the militia, he professed himself scarcely able to find them even bridles. His losses amounted to nearly ten thousand pounds. He had been ejected from his share of Denham's estate in 1654, having never, during the period he possessed it, "made one penny of clear profit by reason of interruption;" and a small parcel of land he had purchased at Ash, in Surrey, in

1651, had been taken from him, and was detained, in spite of his remonstrances, by a member of the Parliament. His creditors also contributed to increase his sufferings by legal expenses, and he at length found himself reduced from an income of 700*l.* per annum, to comparative destitution. Some affecting passages are scattered through the *Speculum Speculativum*. If, as his conscience told him, he had neglected the Almighty in the hour of his prosperity, he remembered Him in loneliness, in poverty, and in tears. At "seventy years and two" he looked forward with feelings of joyful anticipation to the end of his pilgrimage, consoling himself with the certainty of singing "care and life away" in a few brief years or months. His former friends had forsaken him, or were ranged on the side of his enemies, and he bitterly complained that his greatest persecutions were caused by those who

Many days
Walked with him friendlike in the self-same ways.

In his *Hymn of Confession and Praise*, he poured out the earnest prayers of a religious heart.

Therefore take thou no care,
For God thy help will be,
And put on them a greater fear
Than they can put on thee.
Man liveth not by bread alone,
And that (should it be told)
Which now my life depends upon,
Your eyes cannot behold.
You robbed me of external things,
But what the worse am I,
If I have in me living springs
That never will be dry!

Many verses might be quoted from the same compo-

sition, equally touching, and marked by the same pure and Christian resignation*.

Deserted by those whom he had assisted with his labours and fortune, having borrowed money for their use, for which he was obliged to pay interest out of his own pocket, he looked forward to the restoration of the exiled Prince with mingled anticipations of hope and danger. He was weary of the hypocrisy and selfishness of the political charlatans who sacrificed the public good to their personal aggrandizement, and his early respect and attachment to the monarchy began to revive. Immediately after the Restoration, he joined in the universal welcome to the King, and "wanting better gifts," brought

A little cluster of those grapes that grew
Upon his wither'd vine;

an offering he had intended to present with his own hand, had not the difficulty of gaining access to the royal presence prevented him. It is only just to remark that the congratulation was unblemished by the gross flattery which characterised similar productions, and he honestly declared, that knowing nothing of the virtues of Charles, he was unable to write a panegyric in their praise.

But a new storm was already gathering over the poet's head. The church-lands he had purchased of the Parliament were forcibly seized, before the King's

* In the same spirit is a supplication for his family:—

In mercy, too, remember me and mine,
Increase our faith; keep close our hearts to thine
In all our trials: be not so severe
To mark the murm'ings, the distrust, or fear,
Where to we tempted are, but pardon all
Our failings, that we stumble not to fall.

Speculum Speculativum, p. 120.

commissioners had time to decide upon the merits of the question, and the remainder of his stock and goods was taken away in the night. In the *Fides Anglicana, or a Plea for the Public Faith of these Nations*, he dwelt upon his wrongs with considerable ingenuity*. The right of the prelates to the lands of which they had been despoiled was of course unquestionable, but the summary mode employed to dispossess him was contrary to the Royal Declaration.

Wither's situation, at this time, offers a singular contrast to that of his old enemy, Sir John Denham. While our poet was sitting in his solitary chamber on the morning of the Coronation-day, Denham, we are told by Pepys, was leading a party of friends into the Abbey.

The loss of his lands formed only a small portion of Wither's calamity. While engaged in writing a political address† to the Members of Parliament, his room was suddenly entered, and the MS. taken from him, together with a large bag full of books and letters, which was carried away by a porter. He says that the seizure was made without any legal authority, but it appears to have been effected under a warrant from Secretary Nicholas‡. This must have taken place at the beginning of August 1661, for on the 12th of that month he addressed a poem to his friends, from "Mr. Northrops, one of the King's Messengers, in Westminster," where, he adds, he was "civilly used." On the 22nd he was removed to Newgate, and soon after petitioned the

* He says in the *Speculum Speculativum*—

I bought these lands without offending
My conscience, or a wrong to them intending.

† *Vox Vulgi*, being a welcome home from the Counties, Cities, and Boroughs, to their prevaricating Members.

‡ Kennet's *Register*, p. 648.

“Lord Mayor and the rest of the Commissioners of the Peace, and Gaol Delivery, for the city of London,” to admit him to bail. His request was refused, and he returned to his cell and consoled himself with the prospect of soon seeing his wife, who seems to have been living in Hampshire, but on the day before that appointed for her arrival, he received the intelligence of her severe and dangerous illness. Never, he exclaimed, in the anguish of his grief, had he known imprisonment until that hour, when he learnt the sickness of his wife, and called to mind his own inability to assist her or relieve her wants.

————— Despoiled of all she had
 Excepting what might make her heart more sad,
 With foes surrounded, not one to befriend her,
 Nor servants in that weakness to attend her;
 No good physician living there about,
 Scarce any thing within doors, or without
 For food or physic*.—*Crums and Scraps*, p. 80.

The date of his marriage has not been discovered. That it did not take place very early in life, is evident from a passage in *Britain's Remembrancer*, in which he says, after ridiculing the preposterous foreign fashions of the times,

————— I hope that she
 Who shall be mine (if any such there be)
 Whatever accident or change befalls,
 Will still retain her English naturals.

Canto 6, p. 178.

* In the *Fides Anglicana*, p. 37, he speaks of his wife being “necessitated, above fifty miles distant, to keep possession with her maid in a naked house, standing far from neighbours, and much further from honest men:” and in the *Epistle at Randome* he declared, that he knew no person in authority, within many miles of his residence in Hampshire, with whom he could more comfortably converse than with an open enemy.—p. 13.

In the Topographical Miscellanies, quoted by Park, he is conjectured to have been united to Catherine Chester, of Woolvesly, near Winchester, in 1657. But this lady has no claim upon our poet. We learn from Aubrey, that he married Elizabeth Emerson, of South Lambeth, who was a "great wit, and could write in verse too." Her talents and virtues were her only dowry, for he says, in *Salt upon Salt*,

———— Nor by wiving,
Which is to some a sudden way of thriving,
Was my estate repair'd.

Of her domestic tenderness and excellence, Wither has left many interesting memorials. As "woman, mistress, mother, wife," she discharged her duty with piety; unwearied in doing good, her hand was ever ready to assist the neighbouring poor; the morning found her "first to wake," at "night her candle went not out." This excellent woman recovered from her illness, and her grateful husband composed a *Thanksgiving* to God upon the occasion.

The absence of the poet's wife was not his only affliction;—he was supported in Newgate by some of his relations, who, as he pathetically acknowledged, were scarcely able to maintain themselves; and not unfrequently, in the solitude of his cell, he reflected upon the injury his imprudent conduct had inflicted upon them. The destitute condition of his wife and surviving children was also a frequent subject of meditation and prayer. In the *Improvement of Imprisonment* are many affecting compositions of this kind: the following very touching verses may be taken as a specimen:—

Thereof be therefore heedful,
Them favour not the less,
Supply with all things needful
In this our great distress.
And when Thou me shalt gather,
Out of this Land of Life,
Be Thou my children's Father,
A Husband to my wife*.
When I to them must never
Speak more with tongue or pen,
And they be barr'd for ever
To see my face again.
Preserve them from each folly,
Which, ripening into sin,
Makes root and branch unholy,
And brings destruction in.
Let not this world bewitch them
With her besotting wine,
But let Thy grace enrich them
With faith and love divine.
And whilst we live together,
Let us upon Thee call,
Help to prepare each other,
For what may yet befall :
So just, so faithful-hearted,
So constant let us be,
That when we here are parted,
We may all meet in Thee.

How constantly the spiritual well-doing of his children was his anxious theme, will be seen from an epistle addressed to them from Newgate, 15th of February, 1662.

* In the beautiful letter addressed to his wife by Sir Walter Raleigh, when under the fear of immediate execution, he says, after alluding to the vanity of human life :—" Teach your son, also, to love and fear God while he is yet young, that the fear of God may grow up with him, and then God will be a Husband to you, and a Father to him ;—a Husband and a Father that cannot be taken from you." Quarles, in his *Prayers and Meditations*, frequently uses the same image.

To my Dearly Beloved Children,

ABOUT twenty years now past, though I had then *temporal possessions*, which I might probably have given and bequeathed; I composed and intended for your legacy, *A Soliloquy and Prayer*, which I had spread in writing before God on your behalves; and I believe it shall continue for ever in his view. But there being but one copy thereof, both you and I were deprived of that *composure*, when the book for which I here suffer was taken out of my closet. Therefore being now likely to be so separated from you, how much soever it may concern our temporal or spiritual well-beings, that I may, perhaps, thenceforth never see you more, I send you this sacrifice of praise and prayer, next following, to be instead of that which is lost; for it contains in effect somewhat (as to the petitionary part) of that which was spread before God (as aforesaid) in a larger scroll. Take it into your serious considerations, and lay it up among your evidences; for it will speak to your advantage, when I can speak no more for you; when other men, who can speak for you, will not; when many, perhaps, will speak against you, and when you shall not be able to speak for yourselves.

God sanctify unto you this brief *memorandum*, and you to his glory, that we may all meet together in Him to our everlasting joy. Be obedient to your mother, the enjoyment of whose company will more than recompense the loss of mine; for God hath endowed her with so much natural prudence and love, that by her counsel (if you despise it not) your posterity may be continued on the earth, until Christ comes to gather together his elect. Remember the counsel of your earthly father, that the promise made by your heavenly Father to the Rechabites may be enlarged to you and your posterity, for your and their personal obedience to God's covenant made with all mankind in Christ Jesus (according to that assisting grace which He vouchsafed), toward the accomplishing of what I have prayed for concerning you. The blessing of God be with you, and farewell.

Your affectionate Father,

Newgate, Feb. 15, 1662.

GEO. WITHER*.

* From the *Private Meditations*, reprinted 1666, first printed in 1665.

On the afternoon of the 24th of March, he was brought from Newgate to the bar of the House of Commons, and the libel having been shown him, he acknowledged "that the same might be in his hand, but that it was but parcel of what he intended; and the other writing being shown to him, he confessed the same to be of his own hand-writing." Henry Northrop and Robert Heyborne were then called in, and they deposed that they "took the said papers from under Mr. Withers his hand, and that he was writing part of them just when they were taken from him." At the conclusion of the examination, it was resolved that Wither should be delivered "to the Lieutenant of the Tower, there to be kept in close custody, and be denied pen, ink, and paper, and debarred from having any company to come unto him;" and it was referred to the Solicitor-General to draw up an impeachment, and report it to the House at their next meeting. These severe commands seem to have been implicitly followed; even his "black-lead" was taken away, and he had no resource but to scrawl his verses with an "oker-pencil" upon three trenchers, which were carried by the keeper to the Lieutenant of the Tower. He was at this time an object of so much notoriety, that the "diurnal-women" cried the news of his impeachment for treason about the streets.

The House reassembled on the 3d of April, when it was ordered, that the "thanks of this House be returned to his Majesty for his grace and favour, in causing George Withers to be apprehended and detained in custody for the seditious libel by him contrived against the members of this House;" and Lord Falkland was directed to carry the address to his Majesty. Nothing more, however, seems to have been said of the impeachment; and

on the 9th of April, upon consideration of a petition presented on behalf "of George Wither, now a prisoner in the Tower," it was ordered that his wife should be admitted to visit him, with a view of eliciting from him a "recantation and submission for the misdemeanour for which he was committed." But her efforts were slow in producing the required confession, and it was not until the 27th of July, 1663, that he was directed to be discharged, giving bond to the Lieutenant of the Tower for his good behaviour*. Mr. Campbell does not appear to have been aware of this release, for he improperly concludes that the poet died in prison.

The MS. pamphlet, for which he underwent this long and severe imprisonment, was addressed to the Lord Chancellor Clarendon; and it is impossible to account for the vindictive tyranny with which an offence of such slight comparative turpitude was visited. As the work was never printed, it could not be said to have done any injury.

Neither age nor sufferings had any effects upon the fluency of his pen. Soon after his discharge, perceiving the growing differences between this country and Holland, he sounded his *Tuba Pacifica, or Trumpet of Peace*; and when the public mind was agitated by the expectation of an engagement between the English and Dutch fleets, he "breathed out" some dull *Sighs for the Pitchers*; two pitchers being the emblems by which the rival nations were represented on the title-page.

Wither, whose narrative of the Plague in 1625 has been already noticed, was doomed to be a second time the spectator of its dreadful ravages. The pestilence

* Aubrey says that he was imprisoned in the Tower about three quarters of a year; but this is a mistake, for his confinement lasted near sixteen months.

broke out in April, and in June he seems to have escaped its fury; for he observes in the *Memorandum to London*, p. 28, "God be praised, not so much as one hath been sick of any disease in my house since the plague began, nor is it, to my knowledge, near my habitation." But he afterwards suffered from the visitation. In the preamble to the *Meditation upon the Lord's Prayer*, he says, "During the great mortality yet continuing, and wherein God evidently visited his own household, my little family, consisting of three persons only, was visited, and, with my dear consort, long engaged in daily expectation of God's divine purpose concerning our persons; yet, with confidence, whether we were smitten or spared, lived, or died, it would be in mercy; for having nothing to make us in love with the world, we had placed our best hopes upon the world to come." His solitary seclusion was, in some measure, alleviated by the composition of the *Meditations on the Lord's Prayer*. "Providence," he tells us, "inclined my heart to contemplate the aforesaid prayer, when I seemed but ill-accommodated to prosecute such an undertaking; for it was in the eleventh climacterical year of my life, and when, beside other bodily infirmities, I was frequently assaulted with such as were, perhaps, pestilential symptoms; and the keeping of two fires requiring more than my income seemed likely to maintain, I prosecuted my *Meditations* all the day, even in that room wherein my family and all visitants talked and despatched their affairs, yet was neither diverted nor discomposed thereby; but, by God's assistance, finished my undertaking within a short time after the recovery of my servant, whose life God spared."

The plague and the fire, which carried sorrow and

death into so many families, did their work upon our poet's friends. In the *Fragmenta Prophetica*, collected by his own hand a little before his death, he says that many of his friends being dead, "some impoverished, and the remainder, for the most part, so scattered since the late pestilence and fire, that nor he nor they then knew where to find each other, without much difficulty; he being wearied, and almost worn out, is constrained to prepare a resting-place for himself and his consort, which he hath prepared at a lonely habitation in his native country (where he neither had nor looked for much respect), and is resolved to retire there with as much speed as he can, to wait upon God's future dispensations during the remainder of his life." But, in the postscript to the same volume, we are told, what, indeed, few are ignorant of, that the uncertainty and changeableness of all temporal things make us accordingly mutable in our purposes, and that the author had been dissuaded from his retirement "to a solitary habitation in the place of his nativity" by the advice of his friends in London.

These were some of the last words traced by the poet's pen; the path had gradually been growing rougher and more painful, as he wound deeper into the vale of years; but we gather from the *Paraphrase on the Ten Commandments*, published by his daughter in 1688, that his aged hand continued almost to the last hour of his existence to labour in that cause, to which he gloried that he had devoted the morning of his days. He expired on the 2d of May, 1667, and was buried between the east door and south end of the church belonging to the Savoy Hospital in the Strand.

Wither had six children, only two of whom were

living in 1662*, both advantageously married; his daughter, when, through her father's misfortunes, she was left entirely portionless, having been "espoused into a loving family." This child alone survived him, and from her publication of his *Divine Poems*, we may conclude that his affectionate partner had preceded him to the tomb.

Of Wither's personal appearance, the portrait copied for this volume from a fine engraving by J. Payne†, prefixed to the Emblems, affords an interesting representation. We recognise in his manly features the "honest George Withers," of the celebrated Baxter. In the poem accompanying the portrait, he says of himself:

For though my gracious Maker made me such,
That where I love, beloved I am as much
As I desire; yet form nor feature are
Those ornaments in which I would appear
To future times,—though they were found in me
Far better than I can believe they be:—
Much less affect I that which each man knows
To be no more but counterfeits of those,
Wherein the painter's, or the graver's tool,
Befriends alike the wise man, and the fool;
And if they please, can give him by their art,
The fairest face, that had the falsest heart.

If, therefore, of my labours, or of me,
Ought shall remain, when I removed shall be,

* We learn this from his own epitaph, written by himself in 1664-5:
Beside the issue of my brain,
I had six children, whereof twain
Did live, when we divided were.

Both marriages were performed during his imprisonment, and they "kept their weddings" in his plundered house, which was so destitute, that his wife had nothing to entertain them with, not "even a dish or spoon, but what a neighbour lent."—*Three Meditations*.

† There is another by F. Delaram, and one in 8vo. by W. Holle, which has been engraved for the *British Bibliographer*.—Bliss's edition of Wood's *Athen. Oxon.*

Let it be that wherein it may be view'd
My Maker's image was in me renewed ;
And to declare a dutiful intent
To do the work I came for, ere I went,
That I to others may some pattern be,
Of doing well, as other men to me
Have been whilst I had life, and let my days
Be summed up to my Redeemer's praise—
So this be gained, I regard it not,
Though all that I am else be quite forgot.

His manners were, like his poetry, simple and unostentatious; the lines in which he ridiculed the fawning adulation of the age are quoted by Baxter :

When any bow'd to me with congees trim,
All I could do was stand and laugh at him :—
Bless me ! I thought, what will this coxcomb do ?
When I perceived one reaching at my shoe.

He was temperate in his habits ; for life, he said, was preserved with a little matter, and that content might dwell with coarse cloth and bread and water. Like Milton, he indulged in the luxury of smoking ; and many of his evenings in Newgate, when weary of numbering his steps, or telling the panes of glass*, were solaced with “meditations over a pipe,” not without a grateful acknowledgement of God's mercy in thus wrapping up “a blessing in a weed.”

In his performance of the duties of private life he was irreproachable : while the sun rarely went down upon his wrath, his friendship lasted for years. The kindness of Westrow was always remembered with undiminished gratitude. His love to his wife and children was constant and unchanging ; at a period when every

* *Improvement of Imprisonment*, p. 98.

man's hand was against his neighbour, it is delightful to recollect that one family was united in the bond of Christian amity, and that while the night without was dark and tempestuous, the humble charities of the poet's fire-side were preserved inviolate.

If we pass from his private to his public character, the contemplation is not so pleasing. As a politician he was weak and inconsistent, a reed shaken by every wind. Echard called him a dangerous incendiary, and said that he was capable of doing a great deal of mischief. Yet he never became the fosterer of crime, or the apologist of tyranny. He lived, he tells us, under eleven different governments—Elizabeth, James, Charles the First, the King and Parliament together, the Parliament alone, the Army, Oliver Cromwell, Richard Cromwell, a Council of State, the Parliament again, and Charles the Second. In his youth, and for many years after, we have seen him the admirer of the Monarchy, and if he forsook the cause of royalty, it should not be forgotten that he did not long remain with the Parliament; if he became the eulogist of Cromwell, he at the same time spoke to him boldly of his errors. Unlike contemporary rhymers, his flattery seldom degenerated into adulation—he always mixed wormwood with the wine. The man who could indignantly return to the Protector, when in the zenith of his power, the key of his private closet at Whitehall, given as a mark of peculiar favour, was no common individual. His numerous pamphlets, with few exceptions, cannot be numbered among the controversial fruits of the age; they are usually devoted to the expression of his own wrongs, and more frequently deserve the name of Ribble-Rabblements bestowed on them by himself, than any

more honourable appellation. They have none of the menace and defiance, the "trample and spurn" of the polemical Milton. By some he was called a puritan, by others a presbyterian, but his own words show that he was neither. "I am not," he said, "for or against the Presbyterians, Independents, King, Parliament, members, or people, more or less than in my judgment may conduct to the wrong or right way—from or toward the truth of God." Of the royal power he desired a reformation, not an extirpation*, and he drew up a petition against the execution of Charles the First, but could not find any member bold enough to present it.

In his earlier days he had been noticed by the High Church party, and in later times, the leaders of the Republican administration thought him worth their regard. He says that he was known "to the greatest number of the most considerable persons in the nation," and had familiarity with many of them, not "without some appearance of good respect." In the list of his political acquaintance we have found Oliver Cromwell, Lord Essex, Sir Gilbert Pickering, &c.; and he whom the Protector honoured with frequent invitations to his own table, and did not hesitate to soothe by personal visits, must have possessed no little influence. It speaks powerfully for his honesty, that he subsequently forfeited the favour of Cromwell.

His religious feelings are hardly less difficult accurately to define than his political sentiments. He was, almost up to the breaking out of the civil war, a follower

* *Furor Poeticus*, p. 33, and again in the *Epistle at Randome*, p. 15,—
"For I never was absolutely for or against a King, or Commonwealth, with or without a single person, but according as God's extraordinary dispensations, the present necessities, the law of common justice, and the people's assent in Parliament, made it expedient or not expedient."

of the established church, and although solicited by the seductive offers of numerous Sectaries, he still continued to hold fast the faith of his fathers. But Republicanism and Episcopacy could not subsist together; yet he might be said to have forsaken the outward forms of our church rather than its ordinances. When questioned as to his belief, he answered that he called himself a Catholic Christian, a title not affected out of any singularity, but "by way of distinction" only. "I separate myself," he says, "from no church adhering to the foundations of Christianity; I waive the confining my belief or practice to any one national or congregational society of Christians, not out of a factious inclination or petulant disesteem of any; but having a desire to be instrumental in uniting men dissenting in judgment both unto God and each other in love, I conceive that endeavour would be suspected of partiality, and not so effectually prosecuted if I made myself party with any one fraternity more than another. True faith cannot be evidenced without good works, which being imperfect in the best of men, we have no such certain mark whereby unfeigned disciples may be known, as by their being loving to each other and charitably affected toward all men; yea, although they are our personal enemies*."

We may admire the piety of this passage without confessing the justness of the reasoning; we discern in the poet's mild and Christian declaration, none of the gloom of the ascetic, or the harshness of the intolerant bigot. To be of no church, it has been excellently observed, is dangerous; all men cannot, like Milton, preserve "a religion of the heart;" and even in his case we find more to regret than to admire. Wither has left abundant

* *An Answer to some Objections*, reprinted 1666.

testimony to prove the sincerity of his religious professions. If he did not endure his misfortunes in silence, at least he braved them with fortitude; if, amid the overwhelming perils of the country, he too often sat down on his own "little bundle of thorns*," it may be urged in his behalf, that he suffered much and long. In the resolution with which he fulfilled what he considered the commission intrusted to him from above, we trace something of primitive singleness of heart. For nearly half a century he was a "watchman for the nation," unceasingly warning it of its vices and crimes. Through the dangers of the pestilence, and all the changes of Government, he pursued the same course; often, indeed, drawn aside by the importunities and weaknesses of heart, to whose charming no human ear can be utterly deaf, but always returning, after a little while, to his labours. Though the storm of adversity might beat upon his spirits, it could not subdue them; he walked with untired feet,

———— The solitary path
Of disrespect:

at one time threatened with "loss of limb and tortures," at another, glad to escape from his enemies only with "life and raiment." He was imprisoned in the Marshalsea, Newgate, and in the Tower, frequently without any means of procuring the common necessities of life. If he murmured, he did not faint; in the midst of all his persecutions he derived peace and consolation from a sincere reliance on the mercy of Heaven, often exclaiming that he was "excellently sad," and that God infused such happiness into his heart, that grief became to him "Comfort's mother." Under one of his heaviest calamities he could exclaim—

* Jeremy Taylor.

But Lord, though in the dark
And in contempt thy servant lies,
On me there falls a spark
Of loving-kindness from thine eyes.

While lauding his virtues, I am far from being blind to his errors. Had Wither remembered the sacred command, *Do not evil that good may come*, many of his follies would not have been committed. He would then have been more temperate in his satire, more steadfast in his politics, and more decided in his religion. The best apology which can now be offered, is contained in his own affecting words. "Be it considered that some of these books were composed in his unripe age ; some when wiser men than he erred ; and that there is in all of them somewhat savouring of a natural spirit, and somewhat dictated by a better spirit than his own."

Upon the merits of his poetry it is unnecessary to dilate. His early compositions were not, perhaps, sufficiently popular to operate very powerfully on the public taste, but in the *Shepherd's Hunting*, the *Mistress of Philarete*, and the *Shepherd's Pipe*, the correctness and finish of Denham and Waller were united to a natural grace and melody of style to which they have not an equal claim. His touches of rural simplicity have never been surpassed ; in his hand the pastoral reed seemed not to have forgotten the lip of Spenser.

As a sacred poet, Wither is entitled to a distinguished place among his contemporaries. If he does not awe the soul with the majesty of Milton, or crush it with the iron energy of Quarles, or force the tears of rapture into our eyes with the pathos of Crashaw, yet his words come home to every bosom, and no man ever poured the balm of holy truth into a wounded heart with a

more affectionate hand. He had been taught sympathy in a good school, the school of adversity. He was in his own day, we are told, a favourite with young readers; and the purity and love of virtue manifested in all he wrote, rendered him a meet companion. The elements of his art were few; his verses contain no skilful combinations of imagery, or metaphors elaborated with a painful ingenuity; he showed us that the tree of poetry never flourishes with greener beauty, than when deeply rooted in the common joys and sorrows of humanity. The Muse never appeared to him in so beautiful a form, or with so endearing a manner, as when she brightened the chamber of the Marshalsea with her presence; but though, in after-times, he devoted his pen to pursuits which he hoped would prove more beneficial to the world, the fervour and unaffectedness of his youthful strains were not entirely destroyed. While the wit and fancy of Cowley were being chilled into cold and glittering eccentricities; while Donne was torturing his erudition into fantastic images, and Jonson was encumbering his imagination with the treasures of a far-gathered learning, Wither remained faithful to the early models of nature and truth. In the *Halleluiah*, published when he was fifty-three years old, the sincerity and earnestness of his heart are still fresh and vigorous.

Among his poetical friends, in addition to those already mentioned, were the well-known Michael Drayton; Thomas Cranley, whom he styled his brother, the writer of a play called *Amunda*; Hayman, the author of the *Quodlibets**; and Christopher Brooke, a com-

* Hayman was for some time Governor of the Plantations in Newfoundland, where he composed the greater part of his verses. He was, also, a friend of Vicars, who honoured him with an Acrostic Sonnet.

panion of Browne, and a member of Lincoln's Inn, where he became the "chamber-fellow" of Donne, with whom he was imprisoned, on account of that poet's imprudent marriage. Wither also contributed verses to Carter's *Most true and exact Relation of the Expedition of Kent, Essex, and Colchester*, in 1648; to Butler's *Feminine Monarchie, or the History of Bees*, in 1623*; and a Latin poem, signed G. W., before Payne Fisher's *Marston Moor*, may belong to him. Fisher was the unsparing magnifier of Cromwell's actions, and appears to have subsisted upon the proceeds of his flattery. Pepys, who knew him, says in his *Diary*, 26th July, 1660, that the "poet Fisher" wished on that day to borrow "a piece," and that he sent him "half a piece."

In Pinkerton's preface to *Ancient Scottish Songs*, allusion is made to some compositions by Wither among the Bannatyne MSS., but it would seem from the appendix, as Park has remarked, that he can only claim a Scottish version of one of his celebrated songs.

It may not be uninteresting to the reader of the preceding memoir, to know that the poet's name is still in existence in his native place. When the writer was at Bentworth in the summer of 1833, he was surprised, on ascending the steep path leading to the church, to find the name of Withers upon the sign-board of a little public house by the road-side. On inquiry he was informed that this individual came from the neighbourhood of Farnham, in Surrey, and from the long residence

* Some of these lines are not inelegant:—

Great God Almighty; in thy pretty bees
Mine eye (as written in small letters) sees
An abstract of this wisdom, power, and love,
Which is imprinted in the heavens above,
In larger volumes, for their eyes to see,
That in such little prints behold not Thee.

of our poet in that part of the country, it is not improbable that the host of the Five Bells* is descended from the author of the *Shepherd's Hunting*. The same name also hangs before an humble inn in the quiet town of Alton, and one of the keepers of the gate on the road to Winchester owns the same appellation.

HERRICK, HEYWOOD,

&c.

ROBERT HERRICK was born in London, towards the close of 1591, and about the year 1615 he was entered of St. John's College, Cambridge, which he left, after a residence of three years, for Trinity Hall, with the intention of preparing himself for the law, and at the same time reducing his expenses, which were borne by his uncle, Sir William Herrick, who was goldsmith to James the First. Having relinquished the study of the law and applied himself to Divinity, on the elevation of Dr. Barnaby Potter to the See of Carlisle, he obtained the living of Dean Prior in Devonshire, through the interest of the Earl of Exeter. Here, according to Wood, "he exercised his Muse as well in poetry as other learning, and became much beloved by the gentry in those parts for his florid and witty discourse." But this statement is contradicted by Herrick himself, in the address to "Dean-Bourn, a rude river in Devonshire," in which he describes the people to be "churlish as the seas," and almost as rude "as rudest savages." In 1647 or 48, he

* I will not vouch for the accuracy of the sign; I speak from memory, and the subject upon the board has been much defaced by the wind and weather.

was ejected from his preferment by the Parliament, and he declared that he was "ravisht in spirit to be recalled from a long and irksome banishment" to the "blest place of his nativity." Having assumed the habit of a layman, he resided in St. Anne's, Westminster, where he was principally supported by the Royalists. At the Restoration he recovered his living. The period of his death has not been ascertained*.

Herrick is usually admired as the gay writer of a beautiful Anacreontic Song, and one or two poems of a more plaintive character. The *Noble Numbers*, contain some touching strains of religious devotion. In an early number of the *Quarterly Review*, there was an account of a visit to Dean Prior, and of the writer's endeavours to discover some memorials of the poet. His researches were unsuccessful, but he met with an old woman in the parish who repeated with great exactness and propriety five of the *Noble Numbers*, which she called her prayers, and was accustomed to recite to herself at night when unable to sleep. Among them was the following exquisite "Litany to the Holy Spirit:"—

In the hour of my distress,
When temptations me oppress,
And when I my sins confess,
Sweet Spirit, comfort me.

When I lie within my bed,
Sick at heart, and sick in head,
And with doubts discomfited,
Sweet Spirit, comfort me.

* Some interesting particulars of his life, interspersed with a few most unpoetical letters, may be seen in the second part of the second volume of Nichols's *History of Leicestershire*.

When the house doth sigh and weep,
And the world is drown'd in sleep,
Yet mine eyes the watch do keep,
Sweet Spirit, comfort me.

When the passing bell doth toll,
And the Furies in a shoal,
Come to fright a parting soul,
Sweet Spirit, comfort me.

When the tapers now burn blue,
And the comforters are few,
And that number more than true ;
Sweet Spirit, comfort me.

When the priest his last hath pray'd,
And I nod to what is said,
Because my speech is now decay'd,
Sweet Spirit, comfort me.

When the Tempter me pursu'th,
With the sins of all my youth,
And half damns me with untruth,
Sweet Spirit, comfort me,

When the flames and hellish cries,
Fright mine ears, and fright mine eyes,
And all terrors me surprise,
Sweet Spirit, comfort me.

When the judgment is reveal'd,
And that open'd which was seal'd,
When to Thee I have appeal'd,
Sweet Spirit, comfort me*.

The *Thanksgiving for his House* is too long to be extracted, but one stanza may be quoted, to show its peculiar merits :—

* The fourth and fifth stanzas are omitted.

Low is my porch, as is my fate,
 Both void of state;
 And yet the threshold of my door
 Is worne by the poor.

The *Dirge of Jephtha* is also beautiful; the classical reader will notice the Græcism in these lines:—

Thou wonder of all maids li'st here,
 Of daughters all, the dearest dear;
 The eye of virgins, nay the Queen
 Of this smooth green,
 And all sweet meads from whence we get
 The primrose and the violet.

If to these poems we add the *Christmas Carol*, the *Star-Song*, and the *White Island, or Place of the Blest*, I think it will be granted that Herrick's most lasting fame is derived from his sacred compositions. The sentiments of some of his songs have unfortunately disposed us to regard him as the reverse of a religious poet; but he has told us, that although his rhymes were wild, "his life was chaste;" and impurity, we may believe, could never linger long in a mind that could give utterance to thoughts of so much feeling. Let us hope that when, in his touching words (to God in his sickness), he made his home in darkness and sorrow, the mercy of Him in whom he trusted, did indeed renew him, even although "a withered flower*."

* His *Prayer for Absolution* is full of piety:—

For these my unbaptized rhymes,
 Writ in my wild unhallow'd times,
 For every sentence, clause, and word,
 That's not inlaid with thee, O Lord,
 Forgive me, God, and blot each line
 Out of my book that is not thine;
 But if 'mongst all thou findest one
 Worthy thy benediction,
 That one of all the rest shall be
 The glory of my work, and me.

THOMAS HEYWOOD was one of the most prolific dramatists in an age abounding in works of that description. He says, in the preface to the *English Traveller*, that he had "an entire hand, or at least a main finger," in two hundred and twenty plays. His copiousness was not the result of weakness. Charles Lamb has commended, in fitting terms, that tearful pathos which cuts to the heart. But his name is only admitted into these pages in the more honourable character of a Sacred Poet. The *Hierarchie of the Blessed Angels* was published in 1635, and dedicated to Charles the First. It was the produce of his old age, and he cautions the reader in the preface "not to expect any new conceits from old heads," or to look for "green fruit from withered branches." The melody and grace of his dramas will be sought for in vain; unlike Sir Philip Sidney's poet, he does not present the reader at the entrance of the vineyard with a bunch of grapes, so that "full of the delicious flavour he may long to pass in farther:" his manner, on the contrary, is somewhat harsh and unpolished, and he leads him through difficult and abrupt places; but the rugged path frequently ends in a garden. The poem is divided into nine books, to each of which is appended a commentary, evincing the writer's intimate acquaintance with the abstruser studies of theology. Modern students will hardly be persuaded to turn to this ponderous volume, yet it would well repay the trouble of perusal. Some of the Meditations possess a stern and solemn severity.



WILLIAM DOUGLAS

Engraved by J. G. Thompson

FRANCIS QUARLES.

It has been the misfortune of this poet to realize his own aphorism, that "Shame is the chronical disease of popularity, and that from fame to infamy is a beaten road." The favourite of Lord Essex, and the "sometimes darling," of the "plebeian judgments*," is now known to many only in the ridicule of Pope. But Quarles will live in spite of the Dunciad. His manly vigour, his uncompromising independence, his disinterested patriotism, and his exalted piety, cannot be entirely forgotten. These are flowers whose blossoms no neglect can wither.

Francis Quarles was born in the spring of 1592, at Stewards†, in Romford Town Ward, in the county of Essex. He was descended from a family of great respectability, and possessing estates in the adjoining parishes of Hornchurch, Dagenham, &c. His father, James Quarles, was Clerk of the Green Cloth and Purveyor of the Navy to Queen Elizabeth. He died, November the 16th, 1642, and his death is registered in the church of Romford. Our poet received his early education at a school in the country, probably in the neighbourhood, and is said to have "surpassed all his equals." He was subsequently entered of Christ's College, Cambridge, but whether he took any degree, I have not been able to discover with certainty. He was a resident member of the University in 1608.

From Cambridge he went to Lincoln's Inn, where for

* Anthony Wood.

† A manor purchased by his father in 1588.

some years, as we are informed by his widow, "he studied the laws of England, not so much out of desire to benefit himself thereby, as his friends and neighbours, but to compose suits and differences between them;" so early did the love of peace and virtue awake in his bosom. As he grew older, his attachment to the serene pleasures of a quiet life increased. "He was neither so unfit for Court preferment, nor so ill-beloved there," says his widow, "but that he might have raised his fortunes thereby, if he had had any inclination that way: but his mind was chiefly set upon devotion and study, yet not altogether so much but that he faithfully discharged the place of Cup-bearer to the Queen of Bohemia." Of his appointment to this office, I have not met with any contemporary account. Miss Benger, in her amusing *Memoirs of Elizabeth*, does not even mention his name. Quarles may have been an actor in the splendid pageant prepared by the members of Lincoln's Inn, in honour of the nuptials of the Princess, and which is said by Winwood to have "given great content." The fancy of the youthful poet could hardly fail of being fascinated by one who was beautiful enough to win the heart, and accomplished and amiable enough to retain it. Her name was dear to all the poets of the age. That lovely *Canzo* of Sir Henry Wotton, beginning, "You meaner beauties of the night," was composed to grace "this most illustrious Princess;" and Donne, when he visited her in Holland, derived "new life" from the contemplation of the happiness of "his most dear Mistress." How long Quarles continued with the Queen is uncertain. Mr. Chalmers conjectures that he left her service on the ruin of the Elector's affairs, and went over to Ireland. This seems probable, for we find him in Dublin in the

spring of 1621, from which place he dates his *Argalus and Parthenia*, on the 4th of March in that year. His connexion with the learned Usher may have commenced at this period, although we possess no information on the subject.

In his youth, Usher had cultivated the Muse, and we may conclude, from the interesting anecdote communicated to Aubrey by Sir John Denham, that he had been acquainted with the author of the *Faerie Queen*. When Sir William Davenant's *Gondibert* appeared, Denham asked the Bishop if he had seen it. "Out upon him with his vaunting preface," he replied; "he speaks against my old friend, Edmund Spenser." But Quarles had qualities more calculated than a poetical fancy to attract the great Prelate's regard; unaffected piety, unwearied industry, and much rapidity and excellence in prose composition. When he published the *History of Argalus and Parthenia*, Usher was only recently returned to Ireland, on his elevation to the see of Meath; and in the preface, the poet speaks of the work as the "fruit of a few broken hours." It is clear, therefore, that he was employed in severer studies. The poem, he tells us, was "a scion" lately taken out of Sir Philip Sidney's orchard, and "grafted on a crab-stick of his own." The fruit in Sidney's *Arcadia* has been oftener praised than tasted, and Quarles's "scion" has shared a similar fate. Yet the *Fair Parthenia* must have been favourably received, for the poet's son, John, published a continuation of it in 1659*.

But this was not his first production: he had before

* There was also a play of the same name. Pepys says in his *Diary*, January 31, 1660,—"To the theatre, and there sat in the pit among the company of fine ladies, and the house was exceeding full to see *Argalus and Parthenia*, the first time that it hath been acted."

written the *Feast of Worms, or the History of Jonah*, which must have been the earliest effort of his pen, for he calls it his "Morning Muse." In this singular poem, his merits and defects are curiously mingled; there is the same strength, frequently degenerating into coarseness, and the same freedom of touch, and breadth of colouring. The sleepy man whose arms

————— Enfolded knit
A drowsy knot upon his careless breast ;

and the herd of deer, which startled

————— at the fowler's piece, or yelp of hound,
Stand fearfully at gaze—

are natural and pleasing images.

About the same time he wrote the *Quintessence of Meditation*, and the *History of Queen Esther*.

His next work was a paraphrase upon Job, interspersed with original meditations. Of this composition, Fuller, the church-historian, thought very highly. The author in his preface calls it a "work difficult and intricate;" and in the imitative parts he was less successful than in those more strictly original. Passages in the Meditations read like fragments from an uncorrected copy of Pope's *Essay on Man*; they have the strength and roughness which we may suppose to have existed in the draught of that poem, before it grew into perfect harmony beneath the lingering hand of the writer. In the midst of much that is valueless, the mind of the reader is continually startled by pictures of fearful magnificence, or refreshed by touches of pure and gentle description. The fine fable of the Gorgon's head has never been more grandly applied than in these verses, addressed to one deprived of a dear friend.

Advance the shield of Patience to thy head,
And when Grief strikes, 'twill strike the striker dead.

And the comparison, in the third Meditation, of the long-suffering of God to the affectionate care of a nurse, is tenderly worked out:—

Even as a nurse whose child's imperfect pace
Can hardly lead his foot from place to place,
Leaves her fond kissing, sets him down to go,
Nor does uphold him for a step or two :
But when she finds that he begins to fall,
She holds him up, and kisses him withal ;—
So God from man sometimes withdraws his hand
Awhile, to teach his infant faith to stand,
But when he sees his feeble strength begin
To fail, he gently takes him up again.

The plague in 1625, bereaved our poet of one of his best and most esteemed friends, the son of Bishop Aylmer, and he honoured his memory with a collection of Elegies, which must ever be numbered among the most precious tributes of sincere affection, to be found in our language. He gave them the quaint title of “An Alphabet of Elegies upon the much and truly lamented death of that famous for learning, piety, and true friendship, Doctor Ailmer, a great favourer and fast friend to the Muses, and late Archdeacon of London.”

Imprinted in his heart, that ever loves his memory.

They are introduced with this short and affecting address:—

“Readers,—Give me leave to perform a necessary duty, which my affection owes to the blessed memory of that reverend Prelate, my much honoured friend, Doctor Ailmer. He was one whose life and death made as full and perfect a story of worth and goodness, as

earth would suffer, and whose pregnant virtues deserve as faithful a register as earth can keep. In whose happy remembrance I have here trusted these Elegies to time and your favour. Had he been a lamp to light me alone, my private griefs had been sufficient; but being a sun whose beams reflected on all, all have an interest in his memory."

We know that "true worth and grief were parents" to these tears. Strype has related some interesting anecdotes of Dr. Aylmer, in the *Life of Bishop Aylmer* *. Quarles might well call him a "great favourer and fast friend to the Muses:" his charity was extended not only to the poor of his own neighbourhood, but to all who needed it; to indigent scholars and strangers, especially, his hand and heart were ever open. Fugitives from Spain, Holland, France, Italy, and Greece, were all received with kindness and hospitality; for he remembered that his father had once been an exile for his religion. Besides his numberless private acts of beneficence, he supported several deserving Students at the University. The last days of this good man were "beautiful exceedingly." When asked how he felt, he answered, "I thank God, heart-whole;" and laying one hand on his breast, and lifting up the other to heaven, he said, "The glory above giveth no room to sickness." And when death was rapidly approaching,—“Let my people know,” he said, “that their pastor died undaunted, and not afraid of death. I bless my God I have no fear, no doubt, no reluctance, but an assured confidence in the sin-overcoming merits of Jesus Christ.”

Quarles's verses are worthy of so noble a subject; the soul of solemn grief is poured into every line. The 6th

* Oxford edition, p. 118—121.

and 13th Elegies will gain an increased interest from the truth of their allusions. Dr. Aylmer had declared on his death-bed, that his "own eyes" had ever been "his overseers," and it is recorded that he "shut his own eyes with his own hands." Thus the "self-closed eyes" of the poet have a peculiar beauty.

ELEGY VI.

Farewell those eyes, whose gentle smiles forsook
No misery, taught Charity how to look.
Farewell those cheerful eyes, that did erewhile
Teach succour'd Misery how to bless a smile :
Farewell those eyes, whose mixt aspect of late
Did reconcile humility and state.
Farewell those eyes, that to their joyful guest
Proclaim'd their ordinary fare, a feast.
Farewell those eyes, the loadstars late whereby
The graces sailed secure from eye to eye.
Farewell dear eyes, bright lamps—O, who can tell
Your glorious welcome, or our sad farewell !

ELEGY X.

I wondered not to hear so brave an end,
Because I knew, who made it, could contend
With death, and conquer, and in open chase
Would spit defiance in his conquer'd face—
And did. Dauntless he trod him underneath,
To shew the weakness of unarmed death.
Nay, had report or niggard fame denied
His name, it had been known that Ailmer died.
It was no wonder to hear rumour tell
That he, who died so oft, once died so well.
Great Lord of Life, how hath thy dying breath
Made man, whom Death had conquer'd, conquer Death.

ELEGY VIII.

Had virtue, learning, the diviner arts,
Wit, judgment, wisdom (or what other parts

That make perfection, and return the mind
 As great as earth can suffer) been confin'd
 To earth—had they the patent to abide
 Secure from change, our Ailmer ne'er had died.
 Fond earth forbear, and let thy childish eyes
 Ne'er weep for him, thou ne'er knew'st how to prize ;
 Shed not a tear, blind earth, for it appears
 Thou never lov'dst our Ailmer, by thy tears ;
 Or if thy floods must needs o'erflow their brim,
 Lament, lament thy blindness, and not him.

ELEGY XIII.

No, no, he is not dead ; the mouth of fame,
 Honour's shrill herald, would preserve his name,
 And make it live, in spite of death and dust,
 Were there no other heaven, no other trust.
 He is not dead ; the sacred Nine deny
 The soul that merits fame should ever die.
 He lives ; and when the latest breath of fame
 Shall want her trump to glorify a name,
 He shall survive, and these self-closed eyes,
 That now lie slumb'ring in the dust, shall rise,
 And, fill'd with endless glory, shall enjoy
 The perfect vision of eternal joy.

The tautology of the concluding couplet appears to have escaped the poet's notice.

In the same year he printed *Sion's Elegies*, a paraphrase upon the songs of mourning "wept by Jeremie the prophet." In these Elegies are many noble lines: this sublime prayer for Divine inspiration may be offered as a specimen :—

Thou, Alpha and Omega, before whom
 Things past, and present, and things yet to come,
 Are all alike ; O prosper my designs,
 And let thy spirit enrich my feeble lines.
 Revive my passion ; let mine eye behold
 Those sorrows present, which were wept of old ;

Strike sad my soul, and give my pen the art
To move, and me an understanding heart.
O, let the accent of each word make known,
I mix the tears of Sion with my own !

Alas ! that he who could write thus, should have sacrificed his genius to an impracticable theory !

In 1631, he lost his friend Drayton, whose virtues he commemorated in the epitaph inscribed on his monument in Westminster Abbey.

Do, pious marble, let thy readers know
What they, and what their children, owe
To Drayton's name, whose sacred dust
We recommend unto thy trust.
Protect his memory, and preserve his story,
Remain a lasting monument of his glory.
And when thy ruins shall disclaim
To be the treasurer of his name,
His name, that cannot fade, shall be
An everlasting monument to thee.

In the folio edition of Drayton's works, 1748, these verses are attributed to Ben Jonson, but they are here given to Quarles upon the authority of his intimate friend, Marshall, the "stone-cutter of Fetter-Lane," who erected the monument, and told Aubrey that Quarles was the author.

Drayton lived "at the bay-window house, next the east end of St. Dunstan's church, in Fleet-Street," and was generally beloved for the gentleness and amiability of his manners. The puritan and the papist united in his praise ; and it has been remarked by his biographer, that if his morals had been worse, his fortune would have been better. His sacred poems, like all his longer productions, are tedious and diffuse ; but they are the offspring of an humble and religious mind, and many fine thoughts, bold images, and much commanding ver-

sification, are buried in *Noah's Flood*, *Moses, his Birth and Miracles*, and *David and Goliath*. He also composed, during the reign of Elizabeth, a volume of spiritual songs, not included in any edition of his works.

In the same year was published the *History of Sampson*, a work valuable only for the beautiful letter in which it is dedicated.

“To the uncorrupted lover of all goodness, and my honourable friend, Sir James Fullerton, Knight, one of the Gentlemen of his Majestie’s Bedchamber, &c.

“Sir,—There be three sorts of friends: the first is like a torch, we meet in a dark street; the second is like a candle in a lanthorn, that we overtake; the third is like a link that offers itself to the stumbling passenger. The met torch is the sweet-lipt friend, which lends us a flash of compliment for the time, but quickly leaves us to our former darkness; the overtaken lanthorn is the true friend, which, though it promise but a faint light, yet it goes along with us as far as it can, to our journey’s end. The offered link is the mercenary friend, which, though it be ready enough to do us service, yet that service hath a servile relation to our bounty. Sir, in the middle rank I find you, hating the first, and scorning the last; to whom, in the height of my undissembled affection, and unfeigned thankfulness, I commend myself and this book, to receive an equal censure from your uncorrupted judgment. In the bud it was yours, it blossomed yours, and now your favourable acceptance confirms the fruit yours, All I crave is, that you would be pleased to interpret these my intentions to proceed from an ardent desire, that hath long been in labour, to express the true affections of him,

“That holds it an honour to honour you.

“FRANCIS QUARLES.”

This "honourable friend" had been one of the preceptors of the youthful Usher.

The first edition of the Emblems is supposed to have appeared in 1635. Jackson, in his 29th Letter, has this remarkable *P.S.*, "I should have informed you that these Emblems were imitated in Latin, by one Herman Hugo, a Jesuit. The first edition of them was in 1623, soon after the appearance of Quarles. * * He makes no acknowledgment to Quarles, and speaks of his own work as original." In English poetry, at least, the author of the *Thirty Letters* had more taste than learning. This 'one Herman Hugo' was a person of considerable eminence in his day; he was a philosopher, a linguist, a theologian, a poet, and a soldier, and under the command of Spinola, is said to have performed prodigies of valour. The *Pia Desideria*, which suggested the Emblems of Quarles, obtained immense success.

Chalmers, while escaping the error of Jackson, has fallen into another, though of minor importance. After alluding to the plates, he says, "The accompanying verses are entirely Quarles's." This is not correct, for although Quarles possessed too original a mind to follow servilely in the track of any man, yet he frequently translated whole lines, and sometimes entire passages, from the *Pia Desideria*. In general, however, the resemblance is confined to a free paraphrase. Hugo has more Scriptural simplicity, and his occasional meanness of imagery and affectation of manner, are lost in the rapid and sonorous harmony of Latin verse.

"These Emblems," says the writer of an article in the *Critical Review**, "have had a singular fate: they are fine poems upon some of the most ridiculous prints that

* For September, 1801, p. 45, commonly attributed to Mr. Southey.

ever excited meriment; yet the poems are neglected, while the prints have been repeatedly republished with new illustrations. In the early part of the last century, a clergyman restored them to Hugo, their original owner, and printed with them a dull translation of Hugo's dull verses. They next fell into the hands of some methodist, who berhymed them in the very spirit of Sternhold; and this is the book which is now generally known by the name of Quarles. In Spain, the same prints have appeared, with a paraphrase of Hugo's verses. In Portugal, they have been twice published; once by a nun who has fitted to them a mystical romance; once for meditations before and after Confession and Communion, and stanzas on the same subjects by Father Anthony of the Wounds, a celebrated Semi-Irishman."

Pope, in one of his letters to Bishop Atterbury, speaking, I suppose, contemptuously of "that great poet Quarles," refers to the strange character of these illustrations. Many of them are copied, in a miserable manner, from Hugo, and convey, it must be confessed, no adequate idea of the subjects they are intended to represent. Thus the picture on these words, "O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" portrays a man sitting within a skeleton. And another, "O that my head were waters, and my eyes a fountain of tears," &c., exhibits a human figure, with several spouts gushing from it like the spouts of a fountain. And in one of the Emblems of the fifth book, the captivity of the soul to sin is typified by a youth enclosed in an immense cage. These evidences of ill taste in the artist are not without correspondent absurdities in the verses; but the volume

contains several poems of uncommon excellence and originality. The following are alone sufficient to elevate their author to a very distinguished seat among his contemporaries.

THE SHORTNESS OF LIFE.

And what 's a life ? A weary pilgrimage,
Whose glory in the day doth fill the stage
With childhood, manhood, and decrepit age.

And what 's a life ? The flourishing array
Of the proud summer-meadow, which to-day
Wears her green plush, and is to-morrow hay.

Read on this dial, how the shades devour
My short liv'd winter's day ! hour eats up hour ;
Alas ! the total's but from eight to four.

Behold these lilies, which thy hands have made
Fair copies of my life, and open laid
To view, how soon they droop, how soon they fade !

Shade not that dial, night will blind so soon ;
My non-ag'd day already points to noon ;
How simple is my suit, how small my boon !

Nor do I beg this slender inch to wile
The time away, or falsely to beguile
My thoughts with joy : here's nothing worth a smile.

Emb. iii., book 13.

“O that thou wouldst hide me in the grave, that thou
wouldst keep me in secret, until thy wrath be past.”

PSALM.

Ah ! whither shall I fly ? What path untrod,
Shall I seek out to 'scape the flaming rod
Of my offended, of my angry God ?

Where shall I sojourn ? what kind sea will hide
My head from thunder ? Where shall I abide
Until his flames be quench'd, or laid aside ?

What if my feet should take their hasty flight,
And seek protection in the shades of night?
Alas! no shades can blind the God of Light!

What if my soul should take the wings of day,
And find some desert? If she springs away,
The wings of vengeance clip as fast as they.

What if some solid rock should entertain
My frightened soul? can solid rocks sustain
The stroke of Justice, and not cleave in twain?

Nor sea, nor shade, nor shield, nor rock, nor cave,
Nor silent deserts, nor the sullen grave,
Where flame-eyed Fury means to smite, can save.

'Tis vain to flee; till gentle Mercy shew
Her better eye, the further off we go,
The swing of Justice deals the mightier blow.

Th' ingenuous child, corrected, doth not fly
His angry mother's hand, but clings more nigh,
And quenches, with his tears, her flaming eye,

Great God! there is no safety here below;
Thou art my fortress; Thou that seem'st my foe,
Tis Thou that strik'st the stroke, must guard the blow.

It is needless to dwell on the sublimity of these verses; the "flame-eyed Fury," and the sword of Justice swinging from one end of the universe to the other with increasing power, are images worthy of Milton or Æschylus. One or two detached passages may be added.

Look how the stricken hart that wounded flies
O'er hills and dales, and seeks the lower grounds
For running streams, the whilst his weeping eyes
Beg silent mercy from the following hounds;
At length embost he droops, drops down, and lies
Beneath the burden of his bleeding wounds.

Emb. ii., book 4.

Mark how the widow'd turtle, having lost
 The faithful partner of her loyal heart,
 Stretches her feeble wings from coast to coast,
 Hunts ev'ry path, thinks every shade doth part
 Her absent love and her; at length unsped,
 She rebetakes her to her lonely bed.

Emb. xii., book 4.

Mr. Jackson has pointed out the exquisite tenderness and originality of the turtle's belief, that "every *shade* doth part" her from her mate.

Look how the sheep, whose rambling steps do stray
 From the safe blessing of her shepherd's eyes,
 Eftsoon become the unprotected prey
 To the wing'd squadron of beleag'ring flies;
 Where sweltered with the scorching beams of day,
 She frisks from brook to brake, and wildly flies away
 From her own self, ev'n of herself afraid;
 She shrouds her troubled brows in every glade,
 And craves the mercy of the soft removing shade.

Emb. xiv.

The fourth line in the next stanza has been considered to excel the sublime picture of Ruin in the *Night Thoughts*; the last line is equally grand and impressive.

See how the latter trumpet's dreadful blast
 Affrights stout Mars his trembling son!
 See how he startles, how he stands aghast,
 And scrambles from his melting throne!
 Hark how the direful hand of vengeance tears
 The swelt'ring clouds whilst heaven appears
 A circle fill'd with flame, and cent'ed with his fears!

Emb. ix., book 2.

The Emblems were addressed to his "beloved friend, Edward Benlowes," to whom he says, "you have put the theorbo* into my hand, and I have played; you

* A kind of lute.

gave the musician the first encouragement; the music returneth to you for patronage." It was to this individual that Phineas Fletcher inscribed his *Purple Island*, and desired to be "known to the world by no other name" than his "true friend." Benlowes was a member of St. John's College, Cambridge, and a picture of him used to hang in the Master's Lodge. Born to the possession of a respectable estate, he became at an early age the patron of poets, and Brent Hall, in Essex, where he resided, was the scene of frequent hospitality. He was the author of several works, and among others of a poem, *Theophila, or Love's Sacrifice*, now exceedingly rare. Butler, in the character of "a small poet," satirized his poetical attempts with more spleen than propriety. Benlowes was improvident as he was generous, and his latter days were clouded by grief and poverty.

The Hieroglyphics resemble the Emblems. They are dedicated to Mary, Countess of Dorset, whose patronage Drayton obtained for his *Sacred Poems*. From this lady Quarles received many favours. In the Epistle to the Reader, he styles the Hieroglyphics "an Egyptian dish drest in the English fashion." "They," he says, "at their feasts, used to present a Death's-head at the second course; this will serve for both." There is considerable moral dignity and ingenuity of expression in the third Hieroglyphic. Prefixed to it is a picture of the winds blowing the flame of a taper, with this motto, "The wind passeth over it, and it is gone."

No sooner is this lighted taper set
Upon the transitory stage
Of eye-bedarkening night,
But it is straight subjected to the threat
Of envious winds, whose wasteful rage

Disturbs her peaceful light,
And makes her substance waste, and makes her flame
less bright.

No sooner are we born, no sooner come
To take possession of this vast,
This soul-afflicting earth,
But danger meets us at the very womb ;
And sorrow with her full-mouth'd blast
Salutes our painful birth,
To put out all our joys, and puff out all our mirth.
Tost to and fro, our frightened thoughts are driven
With ev'ry puff, with every tide
Of life-consuming care ;
Our peaceful flame that would point up to heaven
Is still disturb'd, and turn'd aside ;
And every blast of air
Commits such waste in man, as man cannot repair.

How many "peaceful flames" have thus, in the knowledge of each of us, been turned away from their heavenward course until they have become extinguished in the dull vapours of the earth we inhabit.

The eccentricities of Quarles were not confined to the style of his poetry ; the measures in which he wrote were equally singular. In the Hieroglyphics he gave some examples of his skill in the construction of the pyramidal stanza. Yet there is something peculiarly impressive in this harmony "long drawn out," and swelling by degrees into a fuller and grander tone:—

BEHOLD,

How short a span
Was long enough of old,

To measure out the life of man ;

In those well-tempered days, his time was then
Survey'd, cast up, and found but three score years and ten.

* * * * *

How soon,
 Our new-born light
 Attains to full-ag'd noon !
 And this, how soon, to gray-hair'd night !
 We spring, we bud, we blossom, and we blast,
 Ere we can count our days, our days they flee so fast !
 Hieroglyphic ix.

In all the notices I have seen of Quarles, he is said to have remained in Ireland until the breaking out of the rebellion in 1641, and then to have fled for safety to England. The following extract from the Journals of the Court of Aldermen, kindly furnished to me by the City Remembrancer, will correct this mistake. "February 4, 1639. Item—This day, at the request of the Right Honourable the Earl of Dorset, signified unto this Court by his letter, This Court is pleased to retain and admit Francis Quarles to be the Cities Chronologer; to have, hold, and enjoy the same place with a fee of one hundred nobles* per annum, during the pleasure of this Court, and this payment to begin from Xmas last."

The office of Chronologer has been long abolished, and its duties are now very imperfectly understood, but they chiefly consisted in providing pageants for the Lord Mayor at stated periods; and in the Records of the City of London is an entry which states that Quarles' predecessor was reprimanded for having omitted to prepare the necessary show. The salary amounted to 33*l.* 6*s.* 8*d.*, a considerable sum nearly two hundred years ago. Quarles held this situation until his death, and "would have given that City," says his wife "(and the world), a testimony that he was their faithful

* A noble was six shillings and eight-pence.

servant therein; if it had pleased God to bless him with life to 'perfect what he had begun.'" What this work was, is not known; no other mention of him occurs in the minute-books.

His new preferment did not make him idle. The *Enchiridion*, a collection of brief essays and aphorisms, came out in 1641. "If this little piece," observes Mr. Headley, "had been written at Athens, or Rome, its author would have been classed among the wise men of his country." It is divided into two books; the first, being political, is inscribed to the young Prince Charles, and the second to the "fair branch of growing honour and virtue, Mrs. Elizabeth Usher," only daughter of the Archbishop. Usher was at this time in England with his family, and the terms in which Quarles alludes to him, show that their intimacy still continued.

"SWEET LADY,

"I present your fair hands with this my *Enchiridion*, to begin a new decade of a blest account. If it add nothing to your well-instructed knowledge, it may bring somewhat to your well-disposed remembrance; if either, I have my end and you my endeavour. The service which I owe, and the affections which I bear your most incomparable parents, challenge the utmost of my ability; wherein if I could light you but the least step towards the happiness you aim at, how happy should I be! Go forward in the way which you have chosen: wherein, if my hand cannot lead you, my heart shall follow you; and where the weakness of my power shows defect, there the vigour of my will shall make supply,—

"Who am covetous of your happiness,

"In both kingdoms and worlds,

"FRA. QUARLES."

A very few extracts will explain the merits of this volume: its great defect arises from the frequent use of

antithesis, a fault, however, almost compensated by the vigour, the eloquence, and the piety of the sentiments. He had not been a guest at the Archbishop's table, and his companion in the study, without gathering something from his stores of learning and wisdom. Dr. Dibdin traces a resemblance between the *Enchiridion* and the *Essays* of Sir William Cornwallis, the younger, the first edition of which appeared in 1601-2; but I think there is much more diffuseness about Cornwallis; he has the eccentricity of Quarles without his power. The following specimens will, it is hoped, lead the reader to the work itself:—

SELF-KNOWLEDGE.

As thou art a moral man, esteem thyself not as thou art, but as thou art esteemed; as thou art a Christian, esteem thyself as thou art, not as thou art esteemed; thy price in both rises and falls as the market goes. The market of a moral man is wild opinion. The market of a Christian is a good conscience.

ON DEATH.

If thou expect Death as a friend, prepare to entertain it; if thou expect Death as an enemy, prepare to overcome it. Death has no advantage but when it comes a stranger.

THE POWER OF CONSCIENCE.

In the commission of evil, fear no man so much as thyself; another is but one witness against thee; thou art a thousand: another thou may'st avoid, but thyself thou canst not. Wickedness is its own punishment.

ON DRESS.

In thy apparel avoid singularity, profuseness, and gaudiness. Be not too early in the fashion, nor too late. Decency is the half way between affectation and neglect. The body is the shell of the soul; apparel is the husk of that shell. The husk often tells you what the kernel is.

The political horizon had long been lowering, and

Quarles, who foresaw many of the calamities which soon after fell upon the country, put forth a few "Thoughts upon Peace and War," full of mild wisdom and christian patriotism.

The "bleeding nation" was constantly at his heart. "His love to his king and country," says his widow, "in these late unhappy times of distraction, was manifest, in that he used his pen, and poured out his continual prayers and tears, to quench this miserable fire of dissension, while too many others added daily fuel to it." Some of these earnest supplications are contained in the *Prayers and Meditations*. "Bless this kingdom, O God," he exclaimed; "establish it in piety, honour, peace, and plenty; forgive all her crying sins, and remove thy judgments far from her. * * Direct thy church in doctrine and discipline, and let all her enemies be converted or confounded." But the torch of discord burned with too fierce a flame to be extinguished by one weak hand. Those wild and lawless passions, which gave occasion to the afflicted Dr. Hammond to call his native land "a whole Afric of monsters, a desert of wilder men," were every day more fearfully developed. The "dove-like spirit" wandered in vain over the waste of waters, for it found not one olive-leaf to carry back "in token that men were content to hear of peace, and to be friends wth God*." The humble home of the poet did not escape the general ruin. The publication of the *Royal Convert*, and his visit to the King at Oxford, attracted the angry notice of the dominant party, who availed themselves of their power to injure him in his estates. Winstanley says, that he was plundered of his books and some rare manuscripts, which he intended

* See Dr. Hammond's Sermon on Jeremiah, chapter xxxi., 18, edition 1649.

for the press. A severer trial soon followed. A petition "full of unjust aspersions was preferred against him by eight men (whereof he knew not any two, nor they him, save only by sight), and the first news of it struck him so to the heart that he never recovered, but said plainly *it would be his death**." Of the precise nature of this fatal petition, we are ignorant; but it evidently had reference to his religious belief. The closing scenes of his life cannot be more interestingly described than in the words of his affectionate wife, who dwells with fervent love upon the "blessed end of her dear husband," which was "every way answerable to his godly life, or rather (indeed) surpassed it. For as gold is purified by the fire, so were all his Christian virtues more refined and remarkable during the time of his sickness. His patience was wonderful, insomuch that he would confess no pain, even then when all his friends perceived his disease to be mortal; but still rendered thanks to God for his especial love to him, in taking him into his own hands to chastise, while others were exposed to the fury of their enemies, the power of pistols, and the trampling of horses.

"He expressed great sorrow for his sins, and when it was told him that his friends conceived he did thereby much harm to himself, he answered, '*They were not his friends that would not give him leave to be penitent.*'

"His exhortations to his friends that came to visit him were most divine; wishing them *to have a care of the expense of their time, and every day to call themselves to an account, that so when they came to their bed of sickness, they might lie upon it with a rejoicing heart.* And, doubtless, such an one was his; insomuch that he thanked God

* Memoir by his widow, p. 15.

that whereas he might justly have expected that his *conscience should look him in the face like a lion*, it rather looked upon him *like a lamb*; and that God had forgiven him his sins, and that night sealed him his pardon, and many other heavenly expressions to the like effect. I might here add, what blessed advice he gave to me in particular, still to trust in God, whose promise is to provide for the widow and the fatherless, &c. But this is already imprinted on my heart, and, therefore, I shall not need here again to insert it."

His charity in freely forgiving his greatest enemies, was equally Christian-like; and when he heard that the individual, whose vindictive conduct towards him had been the chief cause of his illness, was "called to an account for it," his answer was, *God forbid; I seek not revenge; I freely forgive him and the rest*. The only uneasiness he endured arose from the doubts which had been maliciously expressed with regard to his firm devotion to the Protestant church.

"The rest of his time was occupied in contemplation of God and meditations upon the Holy Scriptures; especially upon Christ's sufferings, and what a benefit those have, that by faith could lay hold on him, and what virtue there was in the least drop of his precious blood; intermingling here and there many devout prayers and ejaculations, which continued with him as long as his speech; and after, as we could perceive by some imperfect expressions. At which time, a friend of his exhorting him to apply himself to finish his course here, and prepare himself for the world to come, he spake in Latin to this effect*:—*O sweet Saviour of the*

* O dulcis Salvator Mundi, sint tua ultima verba in Cruce, mea ultima verba in Luce: "In manus tuas, Domine, commendo spiritum meum. Et quæ ore meo fari non possint, ab animo et corde sint a te accepta."

world, let thy last words upon the cross, be my last words in the world. Into thy hands, Lord, I commend my spirit; and what I cannot utter with my mouth, accept from my heart and soul: which words being uttered distinctly, to the understanding of his friend, he fell again into his former contemplations and prayers; and so quietly gave up his soul to God, the 8th day of September, 1644, after he had lived two and fifty years, and lieth buried in the parish church of St. Leonard's, in Foster Lane."

Such was the delightful termination of an active and well-spent life. Though his death was an irreparable loss to his family, yet it was gain to him, who, in the words of his friend, Mr. Rogers, "could not live in a worse age, nor die in a better time." He was removed in mercy from the evil to come. If he had lived, he would only have beheld the rapid gathering of that tempest which he had so earnestly prayed might pass away; the decay of that religion of which he was a meek-hearted disciple; and the sufferings and persecutions of a Master whom he enthusiastically loved. The assertion of Pope that Quarles received a pension from Charles the First, requires confirmation*; but the monarch had a heart to feel, and a disposition to cherish the qualities he observed in the author of the *Emblems*. Who can regret, then, that the poet fell asleep, before the night came upon him!

He was mourned by many friends, and his talents and virtues formed the theme of pens, "neither mean nor few." The verses to his memory, by James Duport, the accomplished Greek professor at Cambridge, ought

* The hero William, and the martyr Charles,
One knighted Blackmore, and one pensioned Quarles.

Imit. Hor., epist. i., v. 386.

to be particularly mentioned. They have all the graceful ease of his happiest manner :—

Quis certa cœlo jam dabit ? aut pium

Emblema texet floribus ingeni ?

Quis symbolorum voce pictâ

Una oculos animumque pascet ?

&c. &c.

In delineating his private life, we are happy to borrow again the pencil of his wife. “He was the husband of one wife, by whom he was the father of eighteen children, and how faithful and loving a husband and father he was, the joint tears of his widow and fatherless children will better express than my pen is able to do. In all his duties to God and man he was conscionable and orderly. He preferred God and religion to the first place in his thoughts, his King and country to the second, his family and studies he reserved to the last. As for God, he was frequent in his devotions and prayers to him, and almost constant in reading or meditating on his holy word. * * * And for his family, his care was very great over that, even when his occasions caused his absence from it. And when he was at home, his exhortations to us, to continue in virtue and godly life, were so pious and frequent; his admonitions so grave and piercing; his reprehensions so mild and gentle; and (above all) his own example in every religious and moral duty, so constant and manifest, that his equal may be desired, but can hardly be met withal.”

From the same affectionate memorialist we learn that he was addicted to no “notorious vice whatsoever;” that was courteous and affable to all, and moderate and discreet in all his actions. His dislike to the tavern

* Preface to the *Shepherds' Oracles*.

festivities of the day, probably tended to produce the antipathy which Mr. Gifford says subsisted between him and Ben Jonson. He was an unwearied student, being rarely absent from his study after three o'clock in the morning. The charm of his conversation was remembered by the bookseller Marriot, who said that it distilled pleasure, knowledge, and virtue, to all his acquaintance.

In his religious creed he was a zealous son of the established church; and it was his dying request to his friends, that they would make it universally known, that "as he was trained up and lived in the true protestant Religion, so in that religion he died." In the latter part of his life he underwent many persecutions, and he seems to allude to his own sufferings in the *Persecuted Man*. "No sooner had I made a covenant with my God, but the world made a covenant against me, scandalled my name, slandered my actions, derided my simplicity, and despised my integrity. For my profession's sake I have been reproached, and the reproaches of the world have fallen upon me; if I chastened my soul with fasting, it styled me with the name of hypocrite; if I reproved the vanity of the times, it derided me with the name of puritan." His Prayers and Meditations form a lasting monument of his fervid piety. The following beautiful supplications cannot fail of being acceptable to all who can sympathize with the expression of unfeigned devotion:—

"Lord, if thy mercy exceeded not my misery, I could look for no compassion; and if thy grace transcended not my sin, I could expect for nothing but confusion. Oh, thou that madest me of nothing, renew me, that have made myself far less than nothing; revive those

sparkles in my soul which lust hath quenched; cleanse thine image in me which my sin hath blurred; enlighten my understanding with thy truth; rectify my judgment with thy word; direct my will with thy spirit; strengthen my memory to retain good things; order my affections, that I may love thee above all things; increase my faith; encourage my hope; quicken my charity; sweeten my thoughts with thy grace; season my words with thy spirit; sanctify my actions with thy wisdom; subdue the insolence of my rebellious flesh; restrain the fury of my unbridled passions; reform the frailty of my corrupted nature; incline my heart to desire what is good, and bless my endeavours that I may do what I desire. Give me a true knowledge of myself, and make me sensible of mine own infirmities; let not the sense of those mercies which I enjoy, blot out of my remembrance those miseries which I deserve, that I may be truly thankful for the one, and humbly penitent for the other. In all my afflictions keep me from despair; in all my deliverances preserve me from ingratitude; that being truly quickened with the sense of thy goodness, and truly humbled by the sight of mine own weakness, I may be here exalted by the virtue of thy grace, and hereafter advanced to the kingdom of thy glory."

"O God, without the sunshine of whose gracious eye, the creature sits in darkness and in the shadow of death; whose presence is the very life and true delight of those that love thee; cast down thine eyes of pity upon a lost sheep of Israel, which has wandered from thy fold into the desert of his own lusts. What dangers can I choose but meet, that have run myself out of thy protection? What sanctuary can secure me, that have left the covert of thy wings? What comfort can I expect, O God, that

have forsaken thee, the God of comfort and consolation? Return thee, O great Shepherd of my soul, and with thy crook reduce* me to thy fold; thou art my way, conduct me; thou art my light, direct me; thou art my life, quicken me. Disperse these clouds that stand betwixt thy angry face and my benighted soul; remove that cursed bar which my rebellion hath set betwixt thy deafened ear and my confused prayers, and let thy comfortable beams reflect upon me. Leave me not, O God, unto myself; O Lord, forsake me not too long, for in me dwells nothing but despair, and the terrors of Hell have taken hold of me. Remove this heart of stone, and give me, O good God, a heart of flesh, that it may be capable of thy mercies, and sensible of thy judgments; plant in my heart a fear of thy name, and deliver my soul from carnal security; order my affections according to thy will, that I may love what thou lovest, and hate what thou hatest; kindle my zeal with a coal from thine altar, and increase my faith by the assurance of thy love. O holy fire, that always burnest and never goest out, kindle me. O sacred light, that always shinest and art never dark, illuminate me. O sweet Jesus, let my soul always desire thee, and seek thee, and find thee, and sweetly rest in thee; be thou in all my thoughts, in all my words, in all my actions, that both my thoughts, my words, and my actions, being sanctified by thee here, I may be glorified by thee hereafter."

The portrait of Quarles is copied from an engraving by Marshall†, and does not realize the flattering account left by the poet's friends, of his personal appearance.

* Lead back.

† Bromley's *Catalogue of Engraved British Portraits*, p. 102.

Marriot says, that "his person and mind were both lovely;" but there is nothing in the warlike countenance before us to identify it with the author of the *Emblems* or the *Meditations*. Marshall also "wrought" his head, we learn from Aubrey, curiously in plaster, "and valued it for his sake. 'Tis pity it should be lost," adds the antiquary; "Mr. Quarles was a very good man."

In addition to the poems previously mentioned, he wrote *Sion's Sonnets*, an Elegy on his friend, Dr. Wilson*, &c. &c. And after his death were published *Solomon's Recantation*, a paraphrase on Ecclesiastes, the *Virgin Widow*, a comedy, and the *Shepherd's Oracles*, which bear internal proof of having been composed about the year 1632. The *Virgin Widow* was acted at Chelsea by a "company of young gentlemen," but has little humour to recommend it. Langbaine calls it an innocent production. In Fuller's *Abel Redivivus* are several poems, the "most part of which," we are told by the quaint Editor, "were done by Master Quarles, father and son, sufficiently known for their abilities therein." The biographer of *The Worthies* entertained a very friendly feeling towards the poet, with whom he was probably acquainted, and he affirmed, that if Quarles had been contemporary with Plato, he would not only have allowed him to live, but advanced him to an office, in his Commonwealth.

Fuller's book is not of common recurrence, but the following lines on the gentle Melancthon and the martyr Ridley, deserve preservation:—

ON MELANCTHON.

Would thy ingenious fancy soar and fly
Beyond the pitch of modern poesy?

* There was something awful in the event which suggested this Elegy. Quarles sat by the side of Dr. Wilson only two hours before his death, at the table of Sir Julius Cæsar, Master of the Rolls.

Or wouldst thou learn to charm the conquer'd ear
 With rhetoric's oily magic? Would'st thou hear,
 The majesty of language? Wouldst thou pry
 Into the bowels of philosophy,
 Moral, or natural? Or would'st thou sound
 The holy depth, and touch the unfathomed ground
 Of deep theology? —————
 Go, search Melancthon's tomes.

ON RIDLEY.

READ in the progress of this blessed story
 Rome's cursed cruelty and Ridley's glory:
 Rome's sirens' song; but Ridley's careless ear
 Was deaf: they charm'd, but Ridley would not hear.
 Rome sung preferment, but brave Ridley's tongue
 Condemn'd that false preferment which Rome sung.
 Rome whisper'd wealth; but Ridley (whose great gain
 Was godliness) he wav'd it with disdain.
 Rome threatened durance; but great Ridley's mind
 Was too, too strong for threats or chains to bind.
 Rome thunder'd death; but Ridley's dauntless eye
 Star'd in Death's face, and scorn'd Death standing by:
 In spite of Rome, for England's faith he stood,
 And in the flames he seal'd it with his blood.

In these few verses the poet has presented a rapid and effective picture of Ridley's life; his frequent temptations, his sublime courage, and his holy resignation, are all recollected. No man "star'd in Death's face" (an image of wonderful power) with a more dauntless eye, than he who suffered and died with Latimer.

It would seem, from an Epigram addressed to F. Quarles, by Thomas Bancroft*, that he was at one time engaged on a poem descriptive of the life of our Saviour. If completed, it was never published.

* *Two Bookes of Epigrammes and Epitaphs, &c.*, 1639.

Upon the poetical character of Quarles, it will be needless to dwell. We may say of him, in the emphatic words of Dr. Hammond, that he was of an athletic habit of mind, braced into more than common vigour by healthful and ennobling studies, and a pure and virtuous life. There was nothing effeminate in his manners or disposition; he was often ungraceful, but never weak. No man had a correcter notion of the beauty of style, or presented a more striking exception to his own rule:—"Clothe not thy language," he said, "either with obscurity or affectation; in the one thou discoverest too much darkness, in the other, too much lightness. He that speaks from the understanding to the understanding is the best interpreter." It would have been good for his fame if he had practised what he taught. His eccentricity was the ruin of his genius: he offered up the most beautiful offspring of his imagination, without remorse, to this misshapen idol.

The specimens given in the foregoing pages will, perhaps, diminish the prejudice so long entertained against their author. They show that he could write with dignity, simplicity, and pathos, and that if his poetry flowed in a muddy stream, particles of precious gold may be gathered from its channel.

His pencil rather "dashed" than "drew," and he wanted the taste and patience to finish his pictures. He was sublime and vulgar at the impulse of the moment. Sometimes, however, images of great delicacy fell unconsciously from his pen. Evangelus' description of the appearance of the Angel in the *Shepherd's Oracles*, may be quoted as an example:—

His skin did show,
More white than ivory, or the new fall'n snow,

Whose perfect whiteness made a circling light,
That where it stood, it silvered o'er the night.

As a writer of prose, he deserves very high applause. His style is remarkably flowing, and animated by a Christian benignity of spirit. Without the copious richness of Taylor, or the mystical eloquence of Brown, or the poignant terseness of South, he possesses sufficient force and sweetness to entitle him to a seat in the midst of these great masters of our language. Quarles was not only a fruitful author; he was also a learned and laborious student, and while Secretary to Archbishop Usher, contributed materially to promote the progress of his theological researches. This interesting fact has, I believe, never been noticed; but Usher alludes to his services in a letter to G. Vossius, and speaks of him as a poet held in considerable esteem, among his own countrymen, for his sacred compositions*.

Of the widow of Quarles, no records exist. With what patience she endured the loss of one whom she so tenderly loved, or how long she survived him, we know not; but we may be assured that the blow was tempered to her strength, and that her husband's dying words, *that God would be a husband to the widow*, received a full and merciful fulfilment.

Of the poet's numerous family, John is alone remembered. He was born in Essex, and afterwards became, Wood says, a member of Exeter College, Oxford, where he bore arms for the King in the garrison of the town;

* The letter is printed in the appendix to Parr's life of the Archbishop, p. 484. The passage referring to Quarles is as follows:—"Ut autem intelligas quibus in Locis Cottonianum Libri primi et tertii Chronicon a vulgato differat; Florentinum Wigorniensem nunc ad te mitto, quem *Francisci Quarlesii Operá, qui mihi tum erat ab Epistolis (vir ob sacratorem poesin apud Anglos suos non incelebris)* cum illo conferendum curavi ad annum DCCCC. Dionysianum a quo quatenus prius missus initium duxit."

but it is not clear that he ever belonged to the University. We find, from his own relation, that he was indebted for his education to Archbishop Usher, in whose house he appears to have resided.

That little education I dare own
 I had, I'm proud to say, from him alone.
 His grave advice would oftentimes distill
 Into my ears, and captivate my will.
 The example of his life did every day
 Afford me lectures*.

Upon the decease of this prelate, to whom he was sincerely attached, he composed an elegy beginning with those beautiful lines :—

Then weep no more ; see how his peaceful breast,
 Rock'd by the hand of death, takes quiet rest.
 Disturb him not ; but let him sweetly take
 A full repose ; he hath been long awake.

The feet of Sion's watchman must have been weary, and his eyes heavy with sleep ! While the royal cause offered any hopes of a prosperous issue, John Quarles continued an active and faithful servant of the king, in whose army he obtained the rank of captain ; but when the strength of the loyalists was exhausted by the repeated victories of the Parliament, he “retired to London in a mean condition,” and about 1649 bade farewell to England, and went abroad, but in what capacity Wood was ignorant. Upon his return he supported himself by his pen, until he was swept away in the plague of 1665. The place of his burial is unknown. His compositions were very numerous, and by some he was “esteemed a good poet,” though deficient in the power and originality of his father.

* An Elegie on the most Reverend and learned James Usher, L. Archbishop of Armagh, 1656.

GEORGE HERBERT.

THE literature of our country is rich in the biography of illustrious men. The names of Spenser, of Shakespeare, and of Milton, have been enshrined in strains of eloquence and beauty, almost as lasting as their own. But it abounds also in histories more simple, and yet not less delightful; sheaves of gentle and religious thoughts bound together by the hands of humble-minded Christians: such are the celebrated lives of Izaak Walton. The accomplishments of Wotton, the learning of Donne, the piety of Herbert, and the sufferings of Sanderson, are faithfully and tenderly recorded in his page—

————— With moistened eye
 We read of faith and purest charity,
 In statesman, priest, and humble citizen.
 Oh! could we copy their mild virtues, then
 What joy to live, what happiness to die!
 Methinks their very names, shine still and bright,
 Satellites turning in a lucid ring,
 Around meek Walton's heavenly memory.

WORDSWORTH.

The life of Herbert possesses the greatest charm, and has long been blended in the heart with scenes of serenity and peace; with the path of the quiet fields to church, and the sweet solemnity of the village pastor's fire-side. "Tis an honour to the place," says Aubrey, "to have had the heavenly and ingenious contemplation of this good man."

The writer of the following memoir has found it impossible to read of Herbert, and not to love him.



Engraved by J. C. Smith

GEORGE ELIOT.

George Herbert was born on the 3rd of April, 1593, in the Castle of Montgomery, in Wales, which had for many years been the abode of his family. Wood calls it "a pleasant and romancy place;" Aubrey dwells with pleasure on the "exquisite prospect four different ways;" and Donne, in one of his poems, celebrates the "Primrose Hill" to the south of the Castle. Nothing, however, now remains, except the fragment of a tower and a few mouldering walls, to remind the beholder of its former greatness.

Mr. Richard Herbert, the father of the poet, was descended from a line of illustrious ancestors; and we are indebted to Lord Herbert of Cherbury, for a graphic sketch of his personal appearance. "And first of my father, whom I remember to have been black haired and bearded, as all my ancestors on his side are said to have been, of a manly, but somewhat stern look, but withal very handsome and compact in his limbs, and of great courage*."

The poet's mother was Magdalen Newport, daughter of Sir Richard Newport, and Margaret, youngest daughter and heiress of Sir Thomas Bromley, one of the Privy Council and Executor to Henry the Eighth. She was a lady of remarkable piety and good sense. Her family consisted of seven sons; Edward, Richard, William, Charles, George, Henry, and Thomas; and three daughters, Elizabeth, Margaret, and Frances.

Of Edward, who subsequently became the well-known Baron of Cherbury, a short account will not be unac-

* There was a tradition in the family of the Herberts of Cherbury, (Fuller's *Worthies*, vol. i. p. 18, ed. Nichols) that Sir Richard Herbert, *tempore* Edward the Fourth, slew, in the battle of Banbury, one hundred and forty men with his own hand. He was of gigantic stature, and the peg on which he used to hang his hat, was to be seen in Montgomery Castle in the time of Fuller.

ceptable. He verified the saying, that the child is father of the man. A boy who had the assurance to signalize the first day of his residence at Oxford, by a challenge to a logical disputation, might reasonably be expected to expand into a character of mingled foppery and intellect. His *Autobiography*, edited by Lord Orford, is a most amusing specimen of lively gossip and conceited philosophy. He begins one passage by informing us, that during his sojourn in Paris he was received in the house "of that incomparable scholar, Isaac Casaubon, by whose learned conversation he was much benefited;" and concludes with an enumeration of his other amusements, the most important of which were, riding on the "great horse," and singing "according to the rules of the French masters." But he is chiefly remembered as one of the earliest reducers of Deism into a system, by asserting the sufficiency and universality of natural religion, and discarding, as unnecessary, all extraordinary revelation. Yet Grotius recommended the publication of the *De Veritate*, and Mr. Fludd told Aubrey, that Lord Herbert had prayers in his house twice a day, and "on Sundays would have his Chaplain read one of Smyth's sermons*."

Mr. Herbert died in 1597, when George was in his fourth year, and the care of his education, consequently, devolved upon his mother, who appears to have been peculiarly fitted for the discharge of this arduous task. She realized the character so beautifully drawn by

* The *De Veritate* was published at Paris in 1624, and among the earliest opponents of the author were P. Gassendi, *Opuscula Philosophica*, p. 411, 419, Lug. 1658; and Baxter, in *More Reasons for the Christian Religion, and no Reason against it*. Locke also alluded to the Treatise in his *Essay on the Human Understanding* (folio ed. 1694), but in terms too cursory to claim the merit of a refutation. He styles Lord Herbert "a man of great parts."



ANDREW TRENKLE

Engraved by J. H. Smith, from a portrait by J. H. Smith.



Quarles in the *Enchiridion*; acting with such tenderness towards her children, that they feared her displeasure more than her correction. Our poet remained under the protection of this worthy woman, and in the quiet of his home, until he reached his twelfth year. During this period he participated, with two of his brothers, in the instruction of a private tutor. He was now removed to Westminster school, and through the kindness of Dr. Neale, the Dean of Westminster, particularly recommended to the notice of Mr. Ireland, the Head-Master. Here the powers of his mind, and the virtues of his heart, were rapidly developed; his progress in classical learning obtained for him the respect and esteem of the tutors, and the amenity of his manners won the affection of his companions.

About fifteen, being then a King's scholar, he was elected to Trinity College, Cambridge; and from an anecdote related in Plume's *Life of Bishop Hacket*, the school-fellow of Herbert, we discover that, even at this time, his acquirements were deemed full of promise. Mr. Ireland assured them, on their leaving Westminster, "that he expected to have credit from them two at the University, or would never hope for it afterwards while he lived." It is recorded of Archbishop Laud, that in his boyhood he gave so many indications of rare genius, that his master, as if with a prophetic certainty of the future eminence of his pupil, used frequently to say, "He hoped he would remember Reading School when he became a great man." It is gratifying to know that both of these anticipations were nobly fulfilled.

So material a change in Herbert's mode of life excited the ever-wakeful anxiety of his parent, and she prevailed on the excellent Dr. Nevil, then Dean of Canterbury,

and Master of the College, to take her son under his protection, and provide a tutor to superintend his studies. Ellis, in his brief notice of Herbert, has remarked that nature intended him for a knight-errant, but that disappointed ambition made him a saint ; but if the editor of the *Early Specimens* had even glanced over the poet's history, he would soon have seen the injustice of his opinion. An extract from a letter, written to his mother in his first year at Cambridge, will throw an interesting light on the state of his youthful feelings.

“ But I fear the heat of my late ague hath dried up those springs by which scholars say the Muses use to take up their habitations. However, I need not their help to reprove the vanity of those many love-poems that are daily writ and consecrated to Venus ; nor to bewail that so few are writ that look towards God and heaven. For my own part, my meaning (dear mother) is, in these sonnets, to declare my resolution to be, that my poor abilities in poetry shall be all and ever consecrated to God's glory.”

I confess my inability to discover any traces of knight-errantry in these sentiments. Jeremy Taylor says, that some are of age at fifteen, some at twenty, and some never. The life of Herbert, even from his boyhood, had been a ministration of purity and peace. Religion in a child is generally considered wonderful, as if the visitations of that daughter of heaven were only made to us when oppressed with years, and in the winter of our days. But this belief is one of the many errors in which we are so fond of indulging. A cruse of pure and beautiful thoughts is intrusted unto each of us at our birth, and if we treasure it as we ought, and employ its divine potency only in the nourishment of the good

and the holy, it will not waste or diminish in the hour of adversity. The amiable Dr. Hammond, when at Eton, frequently stole away from his companions to the most sequestered places, for the purpose of prayer; and Dr. More, the author of the *Song of the Soul*, was wont to declare that in his childhood he was continually sensible of the presence of the Deity.

The society of his mother, and the innocent amusements that beguiled his infancy, had exercised a beneficial influence on the young poet's disposition. He had much cause of thankfulness, also, in the fatherly solicitude of Dr. Nevil, who invited him to his own house, and assisted him with counsel and advice. Perfection, however, is not given to any man, and it is not surprising that the condescending intimacy of the Master, gave birth to sensations of pride in the breast of the high-born Undergraduate. To this cause we may attribute the seclusion in which he lived, and his dislike to the formation of indiscriminate friendships. His few companions were selected for their worth and talents, and among them may be mentioned Nicholas Ferrar, who afterwards rendered himself so notorious by the eccentric enthusiasm of his religious conduct: he was then a member of Clare Hall, of which he had been entered in 1606.

One of the prevalent follies of the young students of the University, at this period, was a love of expensive clothes; and Herbert did not escape the infection. When courtiers placed flowers behind their ears, and one of the most elegant noblemen of the age, William Earl of Pembroke, wore ear-rings, the extravagancies of fashion must have been widely disseminated*. To

* See Burton's *Anatomy of Melancholy*, passim.

what a height they had attained at Cambridge may be learnt from an "Item" in the amusing regulations issued by "the Vice-Chancellor and Caput," before the King's visit in 1614-15.

"Item.—Considering the fearful enormitie and excesse of apparell scene in all degrees, as namely, strange pekadivelas, vast bands, huge cuffs, shoe-roses, tufts, locks, and topps of hare (hair) unbeseeming that modesty and carridge of Students in soe renowned an Universitye, it is straightlye charged, *that noe Graduate or Student in the Universitye presume to weare any other apparell or ornaments, especially at the tyme of his Majestie's abode in the towne than such onely as the statutes and laudable customs of this Universitye do allowe, uppon payne of forfeiture of 6s. 8d, for every default; and if any presume, after this publique warninge, to offend in the premises, such his willfull offence shal be deemed a contempte, and the party so offending shal be punished, over and besides the foresaid Mulet, a months imprisonment accordinglye.*"—Nichols's *Progresses of King James the First*, vol. iii. p. 43-5.

The month's imprisonment was more effectual in deterring offenders than the mulct of 6s. 8d., although that was not a sum to be despised.

The King and Prince Charles entered Cambridge on the 7th of March, with "as much solemnity and course of gallants," as the severity of the weather permitted. The Earl of Suffolk had been recently appointed Chancellor of the University, in the place of his relation, Lord Northampton, and his arrangements for the reception of the Royal visitors were marked by the most magnificent liberality. He was established at St. John's, where his expenses are said to have amounted to a thousand pounds daily. Lady Suffolk entertained her party, consisting principally of the Howards, at Mag-

dalen College. Herbert was now a Minor Fellow of Trinity, having taken his Bachelor's degree in 1612; but I do not find that he took any active part in the preparation of the various amusements with which the University endeavoured to enliven the visit of the monarch. In 1616 he was made Master of Arts; and it appears, from a letter he addressed to Sir John Danvers, in the March of the following year, that his income was not equal to his wants.

Sir John Danvers was the second husband of Mrs. Herbert, who married him about the February of 1608-9. The match is mentioned by that lively gossip, Chamberlain, in a letter dated March 3, 1608-9. "Young Davers (Danvers) is likewise wedded to the widow Herbert, mother to Sir Edward, of more than twice his age*." Sir John Danvers was High Sheriff of Northamptonshire in 1626, M.P. for the University of Oxford from 1625 to 1640, and Gentleman of the Privy Chamber to Charles the First. He subsequently became an active partizan of Cromwell, and was named one of the Council of State. His public life seems to have justified the character given of him by Clarendon, who says that he was a "proud, weak, formal man;" but to Herbert he always behaved with kindness and generosity†.

TO SIR JOHN DANVERS.

SIR,—I dare no longer be silent, least while I think I am modest, I wrong both myself and also the confidence my friends have in me; wherefore I will open my case unto you, which, I think, deserves the reading at the least; and it is, I want books extremely. You know, Sir, how I am now setting foot in

* Birch's MSS., Brit. Mus. 4173.

† Vide Noble's *Lives of the Regicides*, vol. i. p. 163-176; and Nichols's *Progresses of James the First*, vol. iii. p. 979.

divinity, to lay the platform of my future life, and shall I then be fain always to borrow books, and build on another's foundation? What tradesman is there who will set up without his tools? Pardon my boldness, Sir, it is a most serious case, nor can I write coldly in that wherein consisteth the making good of my former education, of obeying that Spirit which hath guided me hitherto, and of achieving my (I dare say) holy ends. This also is aggravated in that, I apprehend, what my friends would have been forward to say, if I had taken ill courses, "Follow your book, and you shall want nothing." You know, Sir, it is their ordinary speech, and now let them make it good; for since, I hope, I have not deceived their expectation, let not them deceive mine. But, perhaps, they will say, "You are sickly, you must not study too hard." It is true (God knows) I am weak, yet not so but that every day I may step one step towards my journey's end; and I love my friends so well, that if all things proved not well, I had rather the fault should lie on me, than on them. But they will object again—"What becomes of your annuity?" Sir, if there be any truth in me, I find it little enough to keep me in health. You know I was sick last vacation, neither am I yet recovered, so that I am fain, ever and anon, to buy somewhat tending towards my health, for infirmities are both painful and costly. Now, this Lent, I am forbid utterly to eat any fish, so that I am fain to diet in my chambers at my own cost; for in our public halls, you know, is nothing but fish and white-meats. Out of Lent also, twice a week, on Fridays and Saturdays, I must do so, which yet sometimes I fast. Sometimes also I ride to Newmarket, and there lie a day or two for to refresh me; all which tend to avoiding costlier matters if I should fall absolutely sick. I protest and vow I even study thrift, and yet I am scarce able, with much ado, to make one half year's allowance shake hands with the other; and yet, if a book of four or five shillings come in my way, I buy it, tho' I fast for it; yea, sometimes of ten shillings. But alas, Sir, what is that to those infinite volumes of divinity which yet every day swell and grow bigger. Noble Sir, pardon my boldness, and consider but these three things. First, the bulk of divinity; secondly, the

time when I desire this (which is now when I must lay the foundation of my whole life): thirdly, what I desire, and to what end, not vain pleasures, nor to a vain end. If, then, Sir, there be any course, either by engaging my future annuity, or any other way, I desire you, Sir, to be my mediator with them on my behalf. Now I write to you, Sir, because to you I have ever opened my heart, and have reason by the patent of your perpetual favour, to do so still, for I am sure you love

Your faithful servant,

March 18, 1617, Trin. Coll.

GEORGE HERBERT.

Of the precise amount of Herbert's income, we are ignorant. He had been elected a Major Fellow of his College in 1615, and it is singular that he does not allude to this circumstance. His father having died intestate, or leaving a will so imperfect that it was never proved, the larger portion of the estate descended to the eldest son, Edward, who tells us that his mother, though in possession of all his "father's leases and goods," committed the provision of the family to him, and he accordingly settled an annuity of thirty pounds on each of his brothers, and a dowry of a thousand pounds on each of his three sisters.

Thirty pounds a year, added to a Fellowship, and managed with prudence, were sufficient to answer all the demands of a College-life more than two centuries ago, though inadequate to the indulgence of the "gentle humour for fine clothes and court-like company," and the love of buying books, which characterized the still youthful scholar. The news of the arrival of a parcel of books from the Continent, induced him to renew his application.

TO THE TRULY NOBLE SIR JOHN DANVERS.

SIR,—I understand from my brother Henry, that he hath bought a parcel of books for me, and that they are coming

over. Now though they have hitherto travelled upon your charge, yet if my sister were acquainted that they are ready, I dare say she would make good her promise of taking five or six pound upon her, which she hath hitherto deferred to do, not of herself, but upon the want of those books which were not to be got in England. For that which surmounts, though your noble disposition is infinitely free, yet I had rather fly to my old ward, that if any course could be taken of doubling my annuity now, upon condition that I should surcease from all title to it after I entered into a benefice, I should be most glad to entertain it, and both pay for the surplusage of these books, and for ever after cease my clamorous and greedy bookish requests. It is high time now that I should be no more a burden to you, since I can never answer what I have already received; for your favours are so ancient that they prevent my memory, and yet still grow upon

Your humble servant,

GEORGE HERBERT.

I remember my most humble duty to my mother; I have wrote to my dear sick sister this week already, and therefore now I hope may be excused. I pray, Sir, pardon my boldness of enclosing my brother's letter in yours, for it was because I know your lodging, but not his.—(No date.)

This dear sick sister was Elizabeth, the wife of Sir Henry Jones. The latter part of her life, we are told by her brother, Lord Herbert, was most sickly and miserable. She pined "away to skin and bones" for nearly fourteen years, and at last died in London, worn out by pain and affliction.

Herbert's requests were not made to Sir John Danvers in vain; we gather from the following letter, that he had given him a horse, a present gratefully valued by the poet:—

SIR,—Though I had the best wit in the world, yet it would easily tire me to find out variety of thanks for the diversity of your favours, if I sought to do so: but I profess it not: and, therefore, let it be sufficient for me that the heart which you

have won long since, is still true to you, and hath nothing else to answer your infinite kindnesses but a constancy of obedience; only hereafter, I will take heed how I propose my desires unto you, since I find you so willing to yield to my requests; for since your favours come on horseback, there is reason that my desires should go on foot. Neither do I make any question, but that you have performed your kindness to the full, and that the horse is every way fit for me, and I will strive to imitate the completeness of your love, &c.

A bright prospect soon began to open before the poet. Upon the resignation of Sir Francis Nethersole, the Public Oratorship of the University became vacant, and Herbert exerted himself with great ardour to obtain the appointment. How delightedly he contemplated the office may be read in his own animated words:—"The Oratorship," he says, "that you may understand what it is, is the finest place in the University, though not the gainfullest, yet that will be about 30*l.* per annum. But the commodiousness is beyond the revenue, for the Orator writes all the University letters, be it to the King, Prince, or whatever (whoever?) comes to the University. To requite these pains, he takes place next the Doctors, is at all their assemblies and meetings, and sits above the Proctors." These were "gaynesses" which he acknowledged would "please a young man well." But notwithstanding his anxiety about the Oratorship, his heart was with his suffering sister. He writes from Cambridge, January 19, 1619: "The things you sent me came safe, and now the only thing I long for is to hear of my dear sick sister."

Sir Francis Nethersole was going abroad on the King's business, and Herbert, who had long known him at Cambridge, was desirous of procuring his interest. Sir

John Danvers undertook to employ his influence in effecting this object.

TO SIR JOHN DANVERS.

SIR,—This week hath loaded me with your favours. I wish I could have come in person to thank you, but it is not possible; presently after Michaelmas, I am to make an oration to the whole University, of an hour long, in Latin, and my Lincoln journey hath set me much behind hand. Neither can I so much as go to Bugden and deliver your letter, yet I have sent it thither by a faithful messenger, this day. I beseech you all, you and my dear mother and sister, to pardon me, for my Cambridge necessities are stronger to tie me here, than yours to London. If I could possibly have come, none should have done my message to Sir Francis Nethersole for me; he and I are ancient acquaintance, and I have a strong opinion of him, that if he can do me a courtesy, he will of himself; yet your appearing in it affects me strangely. I have sent you here enclosed a letter from our Master, in my behalf, which if you can send to Sir Francis before his departure, it will do well, for it expresseth the Universitie's inclination to me: yet, if you cannot send it with much convenience, it is no matter, for the gentleman needs no incitation to love me.

The Master of Trinity College was Dr. John Richardson, one of the translators of the Bible, who succeeded Dr. Nevil. That excellent man died at Canterbury, in 1615.

In another letter to Sir John Danvers, on the 6th of October, he alludes to the fears Sir Francis Nethersole had expressed, lest the "civil nature" of the Oratorship should divert him from the pursuit of divinity.

SIR,—I understand from Sir Francis Nethersole's letter, that he fears I have not fully resolved of the matter, since this place being civil, may divert me too much from divinity, at which, not without cause, he thinks I aim. But, I have wrote

him back, that this dignity hath no such earthiness in it, but it may very well be joined with heaven ; or if it had to others, yet to me it should not, for ought I yet knew ; and therefore, I desired him to send me a direct answer in his next letter. I pray, Sir, therefore, cause this enclosed to be carried to his brother's house, of his own name (as I think), at the sign of the Pedler and the Pack, on London Bridge, for these he assigns me. I cannot yet find leisure to write to my Lord, or Sir Benjamin Ruddyard ; but I hope I shall shortly. Though for the reckoning of your favours I shall never find time and paper enough, yet I am

Your readiest servant,

October 6, 1619, *Trin. Coll.*

GEORGE HERBERT.

I remember my most humble duty to my mother, who cannot think me lazy, since I rode two hundred miles to see a sister, in a way I knew not, in the midst of much business, and all in a fortnight, not long since.

The Lord to whom Herbert refers was probably the Earl of Pembroke. Sir Benjamin Ruddyard was a member of St. John's College, Oxford, where, according to Wood, he laid "the seeds of an excellent poet." This praise is not merited ; but some of his poems were reprinted by Sir Egerton Brydges in 1817*. He was the friend of Ben Jonson, and of the distinguished men of his day. He sat also in the Parliaments of Charles the First, and it was here that he gained for himself the respect of all true lovers of their country. The speeches delivered by him on the 17th of February, 1642 ; and on the propriety of sending *propositions of peace to his Majesty*, ought to be perpetually had in remembrance. They breathe the manly and chivalrous dignity of an English gentleman, chastened by the pure and high-minded earnestness of a true Christian. "Wherefore, Master Speaker," he says, at the conclusion of the last-

* Poems of the Earl of Pembroke and Sir Benjamin Ruddyard, 1817.

mentioned speech, "let us, as wise men, as charitable Christians, as loving subjects, send propositions of peace to the King. I'do verily believe that God will bless us more in a treaty than in more blood. His will be done." When the Independents obtained the "upper hand," he was ejected from the House of Commons, and retired to his estate at East Woodhay, where he resided till his death in 1658.

On the 21st of October, 1619, according to Zouch, Herbert was chosen public orator; but Cole, in his MS. collections, fixes the election on the 21st of January, which must be the correct date, for Herbert writes to Sir John Danvers, January 19;—"Concerning the oratorship all goes well yet; the next Friday it is tried*."

He was now in his twenty-sixth year, and inferior to few members of the university in talents or acquirements. To a more than common proficiency in the academic studies, he united an intimate knowledge of the French, Italian, and Spanish languages. An opportunity of distinguishing himself soon occurred. In 1620, James presented copies of the new editions of his works to the universities of Oxford and Cambridge, and the letter in which Herbert, as orator, acknowledged the

* Herbert was a contributor to the *Lacrymæ Cantabrigienses in Obitu Serenissimæ Reginae*, &c., Cantab. 1619.

Quo te felix Anna modo deflere licebit?
 Cui magnum imperium gloria major erat:
 Ecce meus torpens animus succumbit utrique,
 Cui tenuis fama, ingeniumque minus.
 Quis nisi cum manibus Briareus oculisque sit Argus,
 Scribere te dignum, vel lacrymare queat?
 Frustra igitur sudo; superest mihi sola voluptas
 Quod calamum excusent Pontus et Astra meum:
 Namque Annæ laudes cœlo scribuntur aperto;
 Sed luctus nostri scribitur Oceano.

receipt of the *Basilicon Doron*, immediately procured the favour of the King, who expressed a desire to know the writer's name, and on hearing it, he asked the Earl of Pembroke if he knew him. The Earl replied, that he "knew him very well, and that he was his kinsman, but that he loved him more for his learning and virtue, than for that he was of his name and family." James is reported to have smiled, and to have asked permission that he might love him too, adding that "he took him to be the jewel of that university."

The partiality of James to his hunting seat, at Royston, frequently took him into the vicinity of Cambridge, and when he visited the University he was always welcomed by Herbert, who grew so much into favour, observes Walton, that he had "a particular appointment to attend his Majesty at Royston;" and after discoursing with him, the King told Lord Pembroke that he "found the Orator's wisdom and learning much above his age and wit." Herbert could not have anticipated, when only five years before he was "ranked" with all the students of Trinity, on "each side the entrance," as James passed into the college, that he should soon become the associate of his monarch. But prosperity, though a flowery path, is not exempt from peril. The condescension of his royal master, and the seductive charms of the court, dazzled for a season the eyes of the poet; the old cloisters of Trinity lost their charm, and we are told, that he seldom looked towards Cambridge, except when the King was there, and "then he never failed." Walton, who wrote about Herbert with the tenderness of a brother, describes his feelings "as a laudable desire to be something more than he was." The oratorship had been to both his predecessors the

stepping-stone to political honours, for Sir Robert Naunton was made Secretary of State, and Sir Francis Nethersole was treading in the same path. Herbert may, therefore, be pardoned for surrendering his mind to dreams which must ever hold out allurements to the young and enthusiastic. His flattery of James was only in accordance with the temper of the age. Bishop Andrews and Lord Bacon offered the same incense.

His anticipations were now, indeed, so highly raised, that he would gladly have resigned the oratorship if he could have gained his mother's consent. In one of his poems, apparently written at this time, he refers to his situation with evident dissatisfaction :—

Whereas my birth and spirit rather took
 The way that takes the town :
 Thou didst betray me to a ling'ring book,
 And wrap me in a gown.
 I was entangled in a world of strife,
 Before I had the power to change my life.

Yet, for I threatened oft the siege to raise,
 Not simp'ring all my age ;
 Thou often didst with academic praise
 Melt and dissolve my rage.
 I took the sweetened pill, till I came where
 I could not go away, nor persevere.

* * * *

Now I am here, what thou wilt do with me,
 None of my books will show ;
 I read and sigh, and wish I were a tree,
 For then sure I should grow
 To fruit or shade ; at least some bird would trust
 Her household with me, and I would be just.

But amid all his “gaynesses,” he never ceased to

recollect and lament the afflictions of his sister. How full of brotherly love is the following:—

FOR MY DEAR SICK SISTER.

MOST DEAR SISTER,—Think not my silence forgetfulness, or that my love is as dumb as my papers; though businesses may stop my hand, yet my heart, a much better member, is always with you, and, which is more, with our good and gracious God incessantly begging some ease of your pains, with that earnestness that becomes your griefs, and my love. God, who knows and sees this writing, knows also my soliciting him has been much, and my tears many for you: judge me, then, by those waters, and not by my ink, and then you shall justly value

Your most truly,

Most heartily,

Affectionate brother and servant,

December 6, 1620, Trin. Coll.

GEORGE HERBERT.

And the consolations addressed to his mother, while labouring under a long and painful illness, testify the warmth and steadfastness of his piety.

MADAM,—At my last parting from you I was the better content, because I was in hope I should myself carry all sickness out of your family; but since I know I did not, and that your share continues, or rather increaseth, I wish earnestly that I were again with you; and I would quickly make good my wish, but that my employment doth fix me here, it being now but a month to our commencement; wherein my absence, by how much it naturally augmenteth suspicion, by so much shall it make my prayers the more constant and the more earnest for you to the God of all consolation. In the meantime I beseech you to be cheerful, and comfort yourself in the God of all comfort, who is not willing to behold any sorrow but for sin. What hath affliction grievous in it more than for a moment? Or why should our afflictions here have so much power or boldness as to oppose the hope of our joys hereafter? Madam, as the earth is but a point in respect of the heavens,

so are earthly troubles compared to heavenly joys ; therefore, if either age or sickness lead you to those joys, consider what advantage you have over youth and health, who are now so near those true comforts. Your last letter gave me earthly preferment, and, I hope, kept heavenly for yourself. But would you divide and choose too ? Our College customes allow not that ; and I should account myself most happy if I might change with you : for I have always observed the thread of life to be like other threads, or skeins of silk, full of snarles and incumbrances. Happy is he, whose bottom is wound up, and laid ready for work in the new Jerusalem. For myself, dear mother, I always feared sickness more than death ; because sickness hath made me unable to perform those offices for which I came into the world, and must yet be kept in it ; but you are freed from that fear, who have already abundantly discharged that part, having both ordered your family, and so brought up your children, that they have attained to the years of discretion and competent maintenance ; so that now, if they do not well, the fault cannot be charged on you, whose example and care of them will justify you both to the world and your own conscience ; insomuch, that whether you turn your thoughts on the life past, or on the joys that are to come, you have strong preservations against all disquiet. And for temporal afflictions, I beseech you consider, all that can happen to you are either afflictions of estate, or body, or mind. For those of estate, of what poor regard ought they to be, since, if we have riches, we are commanded to give them away ? So that the best use of them is, having, not to have them. But, perhaps, being above the common people, our credit and estimation call on us to live in a more splendid fashion. But, O God ! how easily is that answered, when we consider that the blessings in the Holy Scripture are never given to the rich, but to the poor. I never find ‘Blessed be the rich,’ or ‘Blessed be the noble ;’ but *Blessed be the meek*, and *Blessed be the poor*, and *Blessed be the mourners, for they shall be comforted*. And yet, O God ! most carry themselves so, as if they not only not desired, but even feared, to be blest. And for afflictions of the body, dear Madam, remember the holy martyrs of God, how they have

been burnt by thousands, and have endured such other tortures, as the very mention of them might beget amazement; but their fiery trials have had an end; and yours (which, praised be God, are less) are not like to continue long. I beseech you, let such thoughts as these moderate your present fear and sorrow; and know that if any of your's should prove a Goliath-like trouble, yet you may say with David, *That God, who delivered me out of the paws of the Lion and the Bear, will also deliver me out of the hands of this uncircumcised Philistine.* Lastly, for those afflictions of the soul: consider that God intends that to be as a sacred temple for himself to dwell in, and will not allow any room there for such an inmate as grief, or allow that any sadness shall be his competitor. And, above all, if any care of future things molest you, remember those admirable words of the Psalmist: *Cast thy care on the Lord, and he shall nourish thee.* (Psalm LIV.) To which join that of St. Peter: *Casting all your care upon Him, for he careth for you.* (1 Pet., ch. v. ver. 7.) What an admirable thing it is, that God puts his shoulder to our burden, and entertains our care for us, that we may the more quietly intend his service. To conclude, let me commend only one place more to you, (Philip. iv. 4.) Saint Paul saith there, *Rejoice in the Lord always; and again I say, rejoice.* He doubles it to take away the scruple of those that might say, What, shall we rejoice in afflictions! Yes, I say again, rejoice; so that it is not left to us to rejoice, or not rejoice: but whatsoever befalls us, we must always, at all times, rejoice in the Lord, who taketh care for us. And it follows, in the next verse: *Let your moderation appear unto all men; the Lord is at hand; be careful for nothing.* What can be said more comfortably? Trouble not yourselves, God is at hand to deliver us from all, or in all. Dear Madam, pardon my boldness, and accept the good meaning of

Your obedient son,

Trin. Coll., May 25, 1622.

GEORGE HERBERT.

In February, 1622-3, the Spanish and Austrian Ambassadors visited Cambridge, and on Thursday, the 27th,

the University conferred on them the degree of M.A. On this occasion Herbert delivered a Latin speech, as laudatory and uninteresting as orations of that kind usually are*.

The death of Dr. Parry, Bishop of St. Asaph, in the September of 1623, enabled the King to reward the merits of Herbert with the sinecure formerly given by Elizabeth to Sir Philip Sidney, and worth one hundred and twenty pounds per annum†. During Herbert's absence from Cambridge, the duties of orator were performed by his friend, Mr. Thorndike, a fellow of Trinity. Bishop Heber, in his life of Jeremy Taylor, professes his ignorance of Thorndike. But Bishop Taylor mentions him in a letter to Evelyn, dated June 4, 1659; and Dr. Hammond alludes to him in one of the Nineteen Letters published by Francis Peck. He also assisted Dr. Walton in the edition of the Polyglot Bible.

In one of his visits to Cambridge, James was accompanied by Lord Bacon and Bishop Andrews, both of

* Cole's MS. Coll. The speech is printed among *True Copies* of all the Latin Orations pronounced at Cambridge, 1623.

† Herbert also gratified James by some Latin Epigrams against Andrew Melville, the leader of the Scottish Anti-Episcopal party. Melville wrote the following verses against the "chapel ornaments:"—

Quod duo stant libri clausi Anglis Regià in Arà,
Lumina cæca duo, pollubra sicca duo—
An clausum cæcumq; Dei tenet Anglia cultum
Lumine cæca suo, sorde sepulta sua?
Romano et ritu dum regalem instruit Aram,
Purpuream pingit, luxuriosa lupam.

Mr. George Herbert, of Trinity College, in Cambridge, says Fuller, made a most ingenious retortion of this *Hexastich*, which as yet, all my industry cannot recover. Yet it much contenteth me that I am certainly informed that the posthume remains (shavings of gold are carefully to be kept) of that not less pious, than witty, writer, are shortly to be put forth into print.—*Church History*, p. 70, book 10. folio, 1655.

Herbert's *Remains* were published in 1652, containing the Country Parson, *Jacula Prudentium*, Prayer before and after Sermon, Epistle to Ferrar, Selected Apothegms, and two Latin poems to Lord Bacon, and one to Donne.

whom embraced the opportunity to form an acquaintance with Herbert. Walton could have no authority for affirming that Bacon permitted none of his works to be printed until they had received the sanction of Herbert; but he manifested his respect for the poet's learning, by requesting his assistance in the translation of the *Advancement of Learning*.

The history of this work is rather singular. It was originally published in English in 1605, and Lord Bacon very early expressed a wish to have it rendered into Latin, that it might become a "citizen of the world." With this view he wrote to Dr. Playfer, the Margaret Professor of Divinity, mentioning his labours in these curious terms. "Since I have only taken upon me to ring a bell to call other wits together (which is the meanest office), it cannot but be consonant with my desire to have that bell heard as far as can be." Dr. Playfer willingly engaged in the translation, but was unsuccessful in satisfying Lord Bacon. Archbishop Tenison observes, in the *Baconiana*, that the specimen which the professor sent to Lord Bacon was "of such superfine Latinity, that he did not encourage him to proceed any further in the work; in the penning of which he desired not so much neat and polite, as clear, masculine, and apt expression." This took place, Mr. Montague thinks, in 1606 or 1607; Hacket speaks of Dr. Playfer's death in 1608*. At this time Herbert was

* In Fletcher's *Poetical Miscellany*, p. 161, is the following Epitaph on Dr. Playfer:—

Who lives with Death, by Death in Death is lying,
 But he who living dies, best lives by dying:
 Who life to truth, who death to error gives,
 In life may die, by death more surely lives.
 My soul in Heaven breathes, in schools my fame,
 Then on my tomb write nothing but my name.

a freshman of Trinity, having resided only two or three days. Hacket, who was elected with him, after praising the eloquence with which Williams, the future archbishop, had eulogized the merits of the departed scholar, informs us, that it was the second day on which "he had worne his purple gown."

Writing many years after to the Bishop of Winchester, Lord Bacon speaks with evident satisfaction of having procured a translation of his book "into the general language." The version was performed, according to Archbishop Tenison, "by Mr. Herbert, and some others who were esteemed masters in the Roman eloquence." The names of Ben Jonson, and Hobbes, the philosopher, deserve particular notice. The beautiful enthusiasm with which the poet vindicated his noble friend, in the hour of his sorrow and misfortune, must always do honour to the memory of both.

Hobbes was an especial favourite with Lord Bacon, who delighted in his conversation, and always availed himself of his aid to "set down his thoughts," when sauntering along the shady walks of his beautiful park at Gorhambury. Hobbes was, in his own day, branded with the charge of atheism; but his friend Aubrey endeavoured to remove the odium from his memory, by declaring that he received the sacrament when lying, as he thought, upon the bed of death. Yet it must be conceded that the author of the *Leviathan* was a most reckless and daring writer upon theology, advancing with a regardless step into the sacred precincts of the holy temple. That he was sincere in his efforts to promote the happiness of mankind, without any intention of depreciating true religion, the careful reader of his works will not entirely refuse to admit. He failed

where the wisest must always fail—in making reason the touchstone of divinity.

After undergoing the supervision of Lord Bacon, the translation was published with the title of *De Dignitate et Augmentis Scientiarum*. Of the contents of the book it would be idle, in this place, to attempt even a sketch, but I cannot pass over in silence a name which the world will not willingly let die. In an age of biography, it is somewhat strange that a full and accurate life of Bacon should still be wanting.

The conclusion of the fifteenth century, and the commencement of the sixteenth, were marked by many momentous changes. The discovery of printing, to use the words of Degerando, had opened a new world to the wondering eyes of the student*. It was the era of the most extraordinary revolution which the physical sciences had ever undergone. Bacon, who, even in his sixteenth year, had shown a disposition to shake off the yoke of the Aristotelian philosophy, stood forth one of the first legislators of the new empire of the sciences. It was finely said by the University of Oxford, in the letter acknowledging the receipt of the *De Augmentis Scient.*: that like some mighty Hercules of learning, he had, by his own hands, advanced further those pillars in the world of letters, which had hitherto been considered immovable. But we must not suppose that he laboured alone; Galileo, in Italy, Kepler, in Germany, and Gassendi, in France, led the inquiries of men forward in the same paths.

* M. Degerando, *Histoire Comparée des Systèmes de Philosophie*, 2nd edition, Paris, 4 vols., 1822, Tom. i. p. 69. It is pleasing to observe the praise with which the *Novum Organum* was spoken of in France by Gassendi, who was one of the first to admit the wonderful genius of the author. He justly characterizes the labours of Bacon, by saying, *ausu heroico novam tentare viam est ausus*.

That he wrote in decided opposition to the dominant opinions of the age may be seen from the manner in which he commits his *Novum Organum* to the "bosom of his University;" expressing a hope that "they be not troubled because the way in which he walks is new," and attempting to palliate the revolution he was conscious of introducing into the old realms of science, by asserting such changes to be inevitable in the course of years. And he boldly lays the axe to the academic prejudices, by declaring implicit faith to be only due to the Word of God, and experience.

Considered only with reference to his literary merits, Lord Bacon stands eminent among the most celebrated writers of his age. He clothes every topic with a richness of diction, and illustrates it with a fertility of fancy, equalled only by some of his contemporaries. His habits were those of a poet, and imparted a kindred splendour to his imagination. It was his custom to have music in an adjoining room while he meditated; and at every meal his table was strewed with sweet herbs and flowers, which, he said, refreshed his spirits and memory. He adorned his domain with the rarest trees, and the most precious birds from foreign lands. The aviary at York-House cost him three hundred pounds. The splenetic Wilson says, that in many things he sought to be admired rather than understood; but he revived the spirit of a beautiful and decaying philosophy, and brought Minerva amongst us once more, with the girdle of Venus in her bosom.

The Chancellor was very intimate with Sir John Danvers, in whose garden at Chelsea he took great delight, and where he may have occasionally met our poet. One day, after walking some time in this garden

with Lady Danvers, he fell down in a swoon, and when he was partially recovered by the application of restoratives, he pleasantly observed—“*Madam, I am no good footman.*” His esteem for Herbert seems to have ripened into a genuine friendship; in 1625 he dedicated to him a translation of a few Psalms in these affectionate terms :—

TO HIS VERY GOOD FRIEND, MR. GEORGE HERBERT.

The pains that it pleased you to take about some of my writings, I cannot forget, which did put me in mind to dedicate to you this poor exercise of my sickness. Besides, it being my manner for dedications to choose those that I hold most fit for the argument, I thought that in respect of divinity, whereof the one is the matter, and the other the style of this little writing, I could not make better choice. So, with signification of my love and acknowledgement, I ever rest

Your affectionate friend,

FR. ST. ALBANS.

The Psalms versified are the 12th, 90th, 104th, 126th, 137th, and 149th, and are entirely destitute of merit, being equally deficient in force and harmony of expression.

The sudden and unexpected death, in 1625, of Lodowick Duke of Richmond, and James Marquis of Hamilton, followed, at a short interval, by that of the King himself, destroyed all Herbert's visions of political distinction, and recalled him to a nobler employment of his talents. But though the visitation was sent in mercy, the sufferer was not prepared to welcome it, and he retired to the house of a friend in Kent, where he lived so privately, says Walton, “and was such a lover of solitariness, as was judged to impair his health more than study had done.” The whisperings of the Siren

still sounded in his ears, and his biographer represents him to have undergone many conflicts with himself, whether he should return to the "painted pleasures of a court life," or again devote his time to the study of divinity. It had been his mother's constant desire to see him in the church, and her prayers were soon to be accomplished. Still hesitating, he came to London and consulted a "court friend," who dissuaded him from entering the church, by flattering his vanity with the illusive honours which his birth and popularity put within his reach. But the film was purged from his eyes, and he beheld the worthlessness of the prizes he had before coveted. He repelled the attempts to undervalue the dignity of the priesthood. "It hath been formerly adjudged," he said, "that the domestic servants of the King of heaven should be of the noblest families on earth ; and though the iniquity of late times hath made clergymen meanly valued, and the sacred name of Priest contemptible ; yet I will labour to make it honourable, by consecrating all my learning and all my poor abilities to advance the glory of that God who gave them, knowing that I can never do too much for him, that hath done so much for me as to make me a Christian. I will labour to be like my Saviour, by making humility lovely in the sight of all men, and by following the merciful and meek example of my dear Jesus."

He appears to have written the *Quip* while smarting under the ridicule of some fashionable acquaintance.

The merry world did on a day
With his train-bands and mates agree
To meet together where I lay,
And all in sport to jeer at me.

First Beauty crept into a rose,
Which when I pluckt not, Sir, said she,
Tell me, I pray, whose hands are those?
But Thou shalt answer, Lord, for me.

Then Money came, and chinking still,
What tune is this, poor man? said he;
I heard in music you had skill—
But Thou shalt answer, Lord, for me.

Then came brave Glory puffing by
In silks that whistled; who but he!
He scarce allow'd me half an eye,
But Thou shalt answer, Lord, for me.

In this year he was ordained a Deacon, but the “day when, or by whom,” Walton was unable to discover. On the 15th of July, 1626, he was made Prebendary of Leighton Ecclesia, in the Diocese of Lincoln, by Bishop Williams. Leighton is a village in Huntingdonshire, and the church was then in so dilapidated a state as to prevent the celebration of divine service. It had been in this condition almost twenty years, during which period various efforts had been made to rebuild it by subscription, but without success. Herbert applied himself to the completion of this good work with an ardour and perseverance that usually overcome difficulties. When his mother, who was residing at Danvers-House, Chelsea*, heard of her son's intention, she sent for him, and urged him, under all the circumstances, to return the prebend to the patron, adding that it was unreasonable to expect that he, with his

* The family seat of Sir John Danvers was at Culworth, in Northamptonshire, but he lived generally at Chelsea. Danvers-House was pulled down in 1696, when Danvers-Street was built on the site.—Lysons's *Environs of London*, vol. ii. p. 123.

weak body and empty purse, should be able to build churches. Herbert is stated to have desired one day to consider his mother's advice, and on seeing her the second time, he entreated her "that she would, at the age of thirty-three, allow him to become an undutiful son; for he had made a vow to God, that if he were able, he would rebuild that church."

So sweet and filial a spirit, united to such calm fixedness of purpose, might have prevailed on a more determined opponent. Lady Danvers subscribed herself, and prevailed upon the Earl of Pembroke to give 50*l.*, which he was induced to increase to 100*l.*, by "a witty and persuasive letter" of Herbert. The Duke of Lenox, Sir Henry Herbert, Mr. Nicholas Ferrar, and Mr. Arthur Woodnot were among the list of benefactors.

Leighton church gradually rose from its ruins beneath the unwearied assiduity of the workmen, whom Herbert cheered by his presence. Walton was misinformed, when he said that the "workmanship was a costly mosaic," and that Herbert lived to see it wainscoted, for in 1795 no traces of either were to be seen*. The builder's primary object was simplicity. There were no communion-rails, but three steps conducted to the altar. The windows were large and handsome, and ornamented with some fragments of painted glass. The seats and pews were of oak, without any ornaments, showing the founder's wish to make no distinction between the rich and poor. The reading-desk and pulpit were placed near each other, and were of an equal height; for Herbert often said, "that they should neither have a precedency or a priority of the other; but that prayer

* See *Walton's Lives*, by Zouch, p. 306.

and preaching, being equally useful, might agree like brethren, and have an equal honour and estimation." In 1795 the church had again fallen into partial ruin.

Before we leave Herbert with his Prebend, something should be said of its munificent donor. A Life of Archbishop Williams, alike free from the adulation of Hacket *, and the malignity of Wilson, has long been a desideratum in our Ecclesiastical Biography. In the gorgeousness of his character, he may be thought to resemble the magnificent Wolsey: throughout his life he was a generous patron of learning. Trinity College partook largely of his liberality. Hacket enumerates ten individuals gathered out of that society alone. Dr. Simson, the author of the *Chronology*, who had been Hacket's tutor, Dr. Meredith, James Duport, the most elegant Grecian of his age, H. Thorndike, Dr. Creighton, Dr. Fearn, M. A. Scattergood, &c. But Williams's patronage of deserving men was not limited to the distribution of the preferments in his gift; for many years he expended annually, in the support of poor students at the University, the sum of twelve hundred pounds; an instance of princely munificence, of which our literary history contains few examples. His own industry was intense and unwearied. He succeeded Lord Bacon in the Chancellorship, and applied himself with so much determination to the despatch of business, that he came into court two hours before day, "so as to be obliged to

* Hacket, who was the Archbishop's Chaplain, wrote with the warmth of a friend, and the intemperance of a partisan. The style of the book is the strangest that can be imagined. It was intended not so much for the memoir of one person, as for a general treatise, and the author says, part ii. p. 229, that his "scope was not so much to insist upon the memorable things of one man's life, as to furnish them with reading out of his small store, that are well-wishers to learning in theological, political, and moral knowledge." To the student, however, this quaint folio is a treasure.

sit by candle-light." Here he remained till eight or nine o'clock, when his duties as Speaker called him to the House of Lords. His public occupations were rarely ended before the evening, and the greater portion of the night he devoted to his private studies. Hackett tells us he seldom retired to rest before three o'clock, and was ready to resume his employments at seven. From his political life truth might gather many shadows for this picture, but on that painful passage in his history, it is not necessary for me to dwell. I would rather remember him as the friend of Herbert, than the enemy of Laud.

In the April of 1626 Lord Bacon died, and Herbert wrote an Epigram on the event.

IN OBITUM INCOMPARABILIS FRANCISCI VICECOMITIS
SANCTI ALBANI, BARONIS VERULAMII.

Dum longi lentiq; gemis sub pondere morbi,
Atq; hæret dubio tabida vita pede;
Quid voluit prudens fatum jam sentio tandem,
Constat Aprile uno te potuisse mori:
Ut flos hinc lacrymis, illinc Philomela querelis
Deducant linguæ funera sola tuæ.

These pretty conceits were not worthy of the poet or his friend. Upon the private life of Bacon, no admirer of his works will love to linger. We scarcely recognise the antagonist of Aristotle in the parasite of Villiers. The philosopher's letters to that profligate courtier are replete with the most ingenious sycophancy; and his treatment of his early patron, Lord Essex, has left a cloud upon his memory which his fame cannot disperse. But under whatever aspect we view him, in the season of prosperity, the honoured servant of his sovereign, or in the "solitude of friends," and under the "ashes of

his fortune*,” his life is full of painful, yet salutary instruction. It teaches us that no genius, however mighty, no acquirements, however varied, will be productive of any real or lasting benefit to their possessor, unless tempered by virtue, and directed by religion.

The death of Bacon was speedily followed by a far severer bereavement. Lady Danvers died in 1627; her health had been declining for several years, having never perfectly recovered from the effects of the illness, during which Herbert addressed to her the beautiful letter printed in a former page. Her funeral sermon was preached by Dr. Donne, with whom she became acquainted while residing at Oxford with her eldest son, and who had before celebrated her virtues in one of his poems:—

Nor spring, nor summer beauty has such grace,
As I have seen in an autumnal face.

To the sermon are annexed some Latin and Greek verses, by Herbert, to the memory of his mother. Bitterly as he felt the loss, the affectionate child found comfort in the remembrance of his filial tenderness and meek obedience to her who was taken from him. His perverseness had never driven sleep from her pillow; his unkindness had never drawn the tears from her eyes; thus the house of mourning lost half its gloom. Lady Danvers was buried in Chelsea Church, and without any monument†.

Soon after her death he resigned the Oratorship in favour of his friend, Robert Creighton.

In 1629, being seized with a sharp quotidian ague,

* His own words in a letter, I think, to Lord Dorset.

† In the burial place in the church at Montgomery (belonging to the Castle) is a great free-stone monument of Richard Herbert, Esq., where are the effigies of himself and his wife Magdalene, afterwards married to Sir John Danvers, and who lies interred at Chelsea church, without any monument.—Aubrey.

he removed, for change of air, to the house of his brother Henry, at Woodford, in Essex. Sir Henry Herbert, who had imbibed the graces of a courtier at Paris, was Gentleman of the King's Privy Chamber, and Master of the Revels. At Woodford our poet remained twelve months. The lines in his poem entitled *Affliction* may have been written while at this place.

At first thou gav'st me milk and sweetness,
I had my wish and way ;
My days were strewn with flowers and happiness,
There was no month but May :
But with my years, sorrow did twist and grow,
—— Sickness clave my bones,
Consuming agues dwell in every vein.

In the hope of escaping from the consumptive symptoms that still threatened him, he visited Dauntsey, in Wilts, the seat of his relative, the Earl of Danby, who entertained a sincere regard for the poet. The "choice air," aided by exercise and rural amusements, improved his health, and the long-cherished intention of devoting himself to the ministry was renewed in his heart. His singular marriage hastened this desired event. Between Herbert and Mr. Charles Danvers, of Bainton, an intimate friendship had subsisted for several years, and Mr. Danvers had been frequently heard to express a wish that he would marry any one of his nine daughters, but particularly Jane, who was her father's favourite. Nothing so much disposes us to admire an individual as the praises of those we love, and it must have been from this cause that Jane Danvers "became so much a Platonic as to fall in love with Mr. Herbert unseen." This romantic incident happened fortunately for their union, for when Herbert arrived at Dauntsey, his friend

was no more. The lovers were, however, introduced to each other by the kind offices of their friends, and Jane Danvers "changed her name into Herbert, the third day" after the first interview. This lady was a kinswoman of Aubrey, who says, she was "a handsome bona-roba and genereuse." Bona-roba was one of the worthy antiquary's choicest phrases, and he applied it to the lovely Venetia Stanley, whose charms have been preserved by the pencil of Vandyke, and the pen of Ben Jonson.

In the April of 1630, Herbert was suddenly deprived, by death, of his kind relation, William Earl of Pembroke. The name of this nobleman is embalmed in the eloquent sketch of Clarendon, and has long been associated with all that is honourable in the poetical history of the reign of James the First. He was an infant when his uncle, Sir Philip Sidney, died; but the groves of Penshurst were his frequent haunt, and within his view was the palace of Knowle, where the Wizard, Buckhurst, had called up the "terrific phantoms of his sombre and magnificent poetry." The son of "Sidney's sister," on whose lips the name of Spenser must have been a familiar word, could not but be a poet, at least in sentiment. Had he been less elevated in rank, his genius might have grown into loftier stature. His poems are only trifles, from the hand of an elegant courtier; but his memory will not die, until Ben Jonson shall be forgotten.

Herbert could not have parted from Cambridge after a residence of nearly nineteen years, without regret. Never had the university been the home of more beloved and gifted children since the time when Spenser pursued his "sweet silent studies" in the quiet of Pem-

broke Hall. Herbert had gazed on faces whose lustre has not yet faded into the common day. At Christ's there was Milton, the "Lady of his college*;" the courtly Fanshaw, the translator of the *Pastor Fido*, was a member of Jesus; Jeremy Taylor, then a beautiful youth, was a poor Sizer of Caius; Herrick enlivened St. John's with his festivity and wit; Giles Fletcher was at Trinity, and his brother Phineas at King's; the names of the celebrated Calamy, and the historian Fuller, even in his boyhood a prodigy of learning; and Mede, the profoundest Scripture critic of the age; and many more might be added to the list.

Herbert's friends were not unmindful of his interest, and on the promotion of Dr. Curle from the rectory of Bemerton to the Bishopric of Bath and Wells, Philip, Earl of Pembroke, to whom Herbert was Chaplain†, requested the King to "bestow the living upon his kinsman." "Most willingly to Mr. Herbert, if it be worthy of his acceptance," was the monarch's answer. We know that, in the subsequent imprisonment of the King, the poems of Herbert were his constant companions; these, with the Bible and two or three other books, constituted his library. We may believe, therefore, that he was already aware of the poet's piety and worth.

This occurred about three months after his marriage. But Herbert, who, like his friend Dr. Donne, was painfully alive to the deep responsibility of the duties he was about to take upon him, had almost determined to decline the "priesthood and that living;" when his old and dear friend, Mr. Woodnot, came to see him at Bainton, where he was staying with his wife's relations, and they went together to thank Lord Pembroke for the presen-

* So called on account of his beauty.

† Aubrey.

tation. The King was then on a visit to the Earl at Wilton, attended by a numerous retinue, among whom was Dr. Laud, who, on hearing the scruples of Herbert, "did so convince him," says Walton, "that the refusal of the living was a sin, that a tailor was sent for from Salisbury to Wilton to take measure, and make him canonical clothes against the next day, which the tailor did." From this anecdote we discover that a distinction of dress was not deemed requisite in persons admitted to Deacon's orders, for Herbert, though made Deacon in 1626, had hitherto worn his sword and silk clothes.

Being habited in his new dress, he went with his presentation to the learned Dr. Davenant, then Bishop of Salisbury, who gave him immediate institution. Dr. Davenant had been Lady Margaret's Professor of Divinity, and President of Queen's College, while Herbert was at Cambridge.

It was not at this time required that a clergyman should be in priest's orders before he could be admitted to a cure of souls; but Herbert longed for the next Ember-week, that he might be ordained Priest, and rendered capable of administering both the sacraments. "At which time," says Walton, "the Rev. Dr. Humphrey Henchman laid his hand on Mr. Herbert's head."

He was inducted to the living on the 26th of April, 1630, and on being left alone in the church to "toll the bell," the sense of his situation so overpowered him, that when Mr. Woodnot, who was surprised at his long absence, looked through the window, he saw him lying on the ground before the altar. While in this lowly attitude, he afterwards told his friend, he "set rules for his future life, and made a vow to keep them." On the third day after his induction, he returned to his wife at

Bainton, and when he had saluted her, he said, "You are now a minister's wife, and must so far forget your father's house, as not to claim a precedence of any of your parishioners." In the *Country Parson* he has left a picture of a clergyman's wife. "If he be married, the choice of his wife was made rather by his ear than his eye; his judgment, not his affection, found out a fit wife for him; whose humble and liberal disposition he preferred before beauty, virtue, and honour." Some of these traits were, perhaps, taken from the character of his own companion, who gained, we are informed by Walton, "an unfeigned love, and a serviceable respect from all that conversed with her; and their love followed her in all places, as inseparably as shadows follow substances in sunshine."

He remained only a short time at Bainton, and then returned to Bemerton. The old parsonage, through the neglect of the late incumbent, was very ruinous; and Herbert, we learn from Aubrey, built a very handsome house, and made a good garden and walks for the minister. A sketch of the parsonage, as it then stood, was communicated by Archdeacon Coxe to Mr. Major for his edition of *Walton's Lives* in 1825. The house now retains few of its original features; a little bedchamber, and one or two Mullion windows only remain; but until a comparatively recent period, the garden continued in the state it had been left in by the poet. The village of Bemerton, which Aubrey calls a "pitiful little chapel of ease to Foughleston," was, in later years, the secluded abode of the amiable John Norris, whose neglected compositions glow with the purest fervour of the Christian philosopher.

We are now arrived at the most delightful epoch of

Herbert's life, when the courtier, the poet, and the scholar, became the lowliest servant of the altar of his God. He did not come to offer unto heaven the paralytic thoughts of an exhausted intellect, or the wild fancies of an excited imagination; his choice was the result of much mental deliberation, assisted by grace and direction from above. He was acquainted with the "ways of learning," and "the quick returns of courtesy and wit," yet he could say, with sincerity and truth, "I love Thee." He knew

— The ways of pleasure, the sweet strains
 The lullings and the relishes of it,
 The propositions of hot blood and brains;
 What mirth and music mean; what love and wit
 Have done these twenty hundred years and more.

The Pearl.

And he now only sought to be guided through the difficult and narrow path leading to the garden of eternal rest. His sense of the fleetingness of earthly loveliness is expressed in his poem on Virtue.

VIRTUE.

Sweet day, so cool, so calm, so bright,
 The bridal of the earth and sky,
 The dew shall weep thy fall to night,
 For thou must die.

Sweet rose, whose hue, angry and brave,
 Bids the rash gazer wipe his eye,
 Thy root is ever in its grave,
 And thou must die.

Sweet spring, full of sweet days and roses,
 A box where sweets compacted lie,
 My music shows ye have your closes,
 And all must die.

Only a sweet and virtuous soul,
Like season'd timber, never gives ;
But, though the whole world turns to coal,
Then chiefly lives.

The last stanza sinks into affectation, but still the immortality of Virtue is a noble idea.

To impress more deeply on his mind the duties of a Christian pastor, he composed the *Country Parson*, which was published after his death by Barnabas Oley. With this little book, so simple in its style, and yet so touching in the affection of its exhortations, many of my readers are acquainted. It was the transcript of pure and gentle feelings, and reflects in every page the meekness and humility of the writer ; it may be truly said to breathe of the "flowers in cottage windows," for among their humble occupants its author loved to dwell, cheering them in sorrow and sickness, and ever ready with a brotherly hand to dry the tears from their eyes. This slight volume leads us to regret the loss of his other prose writings. In a great measure free from the affectation of his poetry, it is at once simple and yet powerful, not laboured, yet elegant, and above all, earnest and sincere. He is not witty, nor learned, nor eloquent, but holy ; all his words, to use his own phrase, were seasoned and dipped in his heart before they were uttered by his lips. With him nothing is common, or insignificant, that bears any relation to the Almighty ; if it had "the honour of that name, it grew great instantly*."

Herbert's first sermon is said by Walton to have been delivered "after a most florid manner ;" but at the conclusion he informed the congregation of his intention to

* *Country Parson*, p. 50.

be in future more plain and practical, a promise to which he faithfully adhered. In all his subsequent sermons—alas, too few!—the texts were constantly selected from the Gospel for the day; and on the afternoon of each Sunday, he devoted half an hour, after the reading of the second lesson, to catechizing the congregation. Like the excellent Archbishop Usher, he attached great importance to this examination: he thought that religion ought to occupy a portion of every day, and it was his constant practice to perform the service of the Church twice a-day, at the hours of ten and four, in the chapel adjoining his house. His wife and the other members of his family were always present, and several of the neighbouring gentry were frequent attendants. Few of his own flock were ever absent, and many of his poorer parishioners “would let their plough rest” when his bell invited to prayer; and, having partaken in that simple and beautiful worship, return to their rural employment.

His manners and habits were in harmony with his professions; every thing around him was plain and unostentatious. The pleasant picture in the *Country Parson* was probably copied from his own dwelling. “The furniture of his house is very plain, but clean, whole, and sweet; *as sweet as his garden can make*; for he hath no money for such things, charity being his only perfume.” The “Country Parson’s library,” he felt to be, “a holy life.” Music was his most grateful recreation at Bemerton, as it had formerly been at Cambridge. Aubrey says, he had a very good hand on the lute, to which he set many of his sacred poems. He usually walked twice a-week from his house to Salisbury, a distance of two miles, to hear the Anthem in the

Cathedral, observing that the time spent in prayer and solemn music elevated his soul, and was his heaven on earth. He has expressed this feeling in a poem, called *Church Music*:—

Sweetest of sweets, I thank you ; when displeasure
Did through my body wound my mind,
You took me thence, and in your house of pleasure
A dainty lodging me assign'd.

Now I in you without a body move,
Rising and falling with your wings,
We both together sweetly live and love,
Yet say sometimes, "God help poor Kings!"

Comfort, I'll die ; for, if you post from me,
Sure I shall do so and much more :
But if I travel in your company,
You know the way to heaven's door.

The evenings of the days on which he visited the Cathedral, he frequently spent at a private music-meeting in the same city, a custom he justified by saying, that religion does not banish mirth, but only moderates and sets rules to it.

Walton relates an anecdote of one of these walks to Salisbury. When Herbert was some way on his journey, he overtook a poor man, standing by a "poorer horse," that had fallen down beneath too heavy a burden ; and seeing the distress of one, and the suffering of the other, he put off his canonical dress, and helped the man to unload, and afterward to reload the horse, and then giving him money to refresh himself and the animal, departed, at the same time telling him that if he loved himself he should be merciful to his beast. This incident afforded a subject to the Royal Academician, Cooper, for an interesting design.

Donne's intimacy with Herbert's mother has been already noticed, and he entertained an equal regard for the poet. This sympathy was "maintained by many sacred endearments." Not long before Donne's death, "he caused to be drawn a figure of the body of Christ, extended upon an anchor," the emblem of hope. Many of these figures were minutely engraved on heliotropes, called by the jewellers, from their peculiar colour, blood-stones, and being set in gold, under the form of seals or rings, were sent to some of his friends as tokens of his esteem. Among these were the learned Sir Henry Wotton, the eloquent Bishop Hall, Dr. Duppa, Dr. Henry King, Bishop of Chichester, and George Herbert, to whom the gift was accompanied by some verses, full of affectionate piety and interest in his welfare. An engraving of one of the seals, traditionally handed down as the identical one belonging to Herbert, was given in the 77th volume of the *Gentleman's Magazine**.

No reader of Donne's poetry would imagine him to have been a high-minded enthusiast, overflowing with romance and kindliness. While he was in Spain, he prepared to visit the Holy Sepulchre, and only relinquished the undertaking when convinced of its impracticability. And when he wrote from the fire-side in his parlour, "in the noise of three gamesome children, and by the side of her whom he had transplanted into a wretched fortune," and therefore laboured the more to beguile her sorrows by his "company and discourse," all his words were dictated by domestic tenderness†. As a poet, he has not had his reward; he has perished through not being understood. His friend, Ben Jonson,

* Part i. p. 313.

† See *Letters*, ed. 1654, p. 137.

considered his applause the guarantee of future fame, and was fond of repeating that passage in the *Calm*:—

————— And in one place lay
Feathers and dust, to day, and yesterday*.

His versification is modulated with no art, and the location of the words is often careless and incorrect; but some of his strains have a depth of meaning, and a solemnity of thought, not found in his smoother rivals. A Hymn, composed on a sick-bed, presents a fine specimen of his manner:—

TO GOD THE FATHER.

Wilt Thou forgive that sin which I begun,
Which was my sin, though it was done before?
Wilt Thou forgive that sin through which I run,
And do run still, though still I do deplore?
When Thou hast done, thou hast not done,
For I have more.

Wilt Thou forgive that sin which I have won
Others to sin, and made my sin their door?
Wilt Thou forgive that sin which I did shun,
A year or two, but wallow'd in a score?
When Thou hast done, Thou hast not done,
For I have more.

I have a sin of fear, that when I've spun
My last thread I shall perish on the shore;
But swear by Thyself, that at my death Thy sun
Shall shine as he shines now, and heretofore;
And having done that, Thou hast done—
I fear no more.

This Hymn was set to “a most grave and solemn tune,” and he delighted to hear it sung to the organ by

* This anecdote is told on the authority of Drummond of Hawthornden, but the lines referred to are printed from the edition of Donne's Poems in 1650. Drummond, quoting, perhaps, from memory, writes them thus, “Dust and feathers do not stirr, all was so quiet.”

the choristers of St. Paul's, at the evening service. Like Herbert, he was an ardent admirer of Sacred melody, and was wont to exclaim, "O, the power of Church-music." From Donne's Holy Sonnets, one extract may be offered. The thought on Death is not unworthy of the bard who knelt at "the footstool of the Ancient of Days."

Death be not proud, though some have called thee
Mighty and dreadful, for thou art not so,
For those whom thou think'st thou dost overthrow,
Die not, poor Death, nor yet canst thou kill me ;
From rest and sleep, which but thy pictures be,
Much pleasure, then from thee, much more must flow ;
And soonest our best men with thee do go,
Rest of their bones, and souls' delivery.
Thou art slave to fate, chance, kings, and desperate men,
And dost with poison, war, and sickness, dwell ;
And poppy, or charms, can make us sleep as well,
And better than thy stroke; why swell'st thou then ?
Our short sleep past, we wake eternally,
And Death shall be no more—Death thou shalt die !

But the evening of Herbert's life was rapidly drawing nigh. His constitution, always delicate, evinced symptoms of a fatal decline. The sword had worn out the scabbard; but he did not cease to labour; and in the midst of his griefs, prepared some notes for *The Considerations of John Valdesso*, a Spanish reformer of the 16th century, which his friend, Mr. Ferrar, had translated, and sent them to him with a letter, printed in his Remains.

Unaffected by the ills of the body, the inner man grew stronger every hour; and although almost unable to leave his house, he still persevered in reading prayers

twice a-day in his chapel, until prevailed on by the importunities of his wife to confide the duty to his Curate, Mr. Bostock. About a month before his death, Mr. N. Ferrar, whom I believe he had not met since their separation at Cambridge, sent Mr. Edmund Duncon to inquire after his health, and to assure him of his prayers*. When Mr. Duncon entered the room, Herbert was lying on the bed quite exhausted, but turning to him he said, "I see by your habit that you are a Priest, and I desire you to pray with me." When Mr. Duncon asked what prayers he would prefer, he replied, "O, Sir, the prayers of my mother, the Church of England; no other prayers are equal to them." He was, however, too weak to hear more than the Litany. Mr. Duncon remained at Bemerton three weeks, when his place was supplied by one of Herbert's dearest friends, Mr. A. Woodnot; who declared, after the lapse of well-nigh forty years, that the patience and resignation of the sufferer were fresh in his memory.

Walton's narrative of the last days of the poet is exceedingly pathetic. On the Sunday preceding his death, he called for his lute, and played and sung a verse from his poem named *Sunday*. Thus he continued meditating, and praying, and rejoicing, until he expired. On the morning of that melancholy day, he said to Mr. Woodnot: "My dear friend, I am sorry I have nothing to present to my merciful God, but sin and misery; but the first is pardoned, and a few hours

* "On Friday (date not mentioned), Mr. Mapletoft brought us word that Mr. Herbert was said to be past hope of recovery, which was very grievous news to us, and so much the more so, being altogether unexpected. We presently, therefore, made our public supplication for his health, in the words and manner following." The prayer is printed in the appendix to the life of Nicholas Ferrar, in Wordsworth's *Ecclesiastical Biography*, vol. v., p. 265.

will now put a period to the latter, for I shall suddenly go hence, and be no more seen."

When Mr. Woodnot reminded him of his benefactions to Leighton Church, and his numberless acts of private charity, he only answered, "They be good works if they be sprinkled with the blood of Christ, and not otherwise."

He often conversed with his wife and Mr. Woodnot about his approaching dissolution. "I now look back," he said, "upon the pleasures of my life past, and see the content I have taken in beauty, in wit, in music, and pleasant conversation, which are now all past by me like a dream, or as a shadow that returns not, and are all now become dead to me, or I to them; and I see, that as my father and generation have done before me, so I, also, shall now suddenly (with Job) make my bed in the dark. And I praise God I am prepared for it; and I praise him I am not to learn patience now I stand in such need of it; and that I have practised mortification, and endeavoured to die daily, that I might not die eternally; and my hope is, that I shall shortly leave this valley of tears, and be free from all fever and pain; and, which will be a more happy condition, I shall be free from sin, and all the temptations and anxieties that attend it. And this being past, I shall dwell in the New Jerusalem, dwell there with men made perfect, dwell where these eyes shall see my Master and Saviour, Jesus; and with him see my dear mother, and all my relations and friends."

Thus the hours of his sickness became hours of rejoicing, and a light that went not out shone over the dark chamber, for he felt that he was "going daily towards" his final resting-place.

After this discourse he became more restless, and

“his soul,” says Walton, “seemed to be weary of her earthly tabernacle; and this uneasiness became so visible, that his wife, his three nieces, and Mr. Woodnot, stood constantly about his bed, beholding him with sorrow, and an unwillingness to lose the sight of him, which they could not hope to see much longer. As they stood thus beholding him, his wife observed him to breathe faintly, and with much trouble, and observed him to a fall into a sudden agony, which so surprised her, that she fell into a sudden passion, and required of him to know how he did. To which his answer was, that *he had passed a conflict with his last enemy, and had overcome him by the merits of his Master, Jesus.* After which answer, he looked up and saw his wife and nieces weeping to an extremity, and charged them, *if they loved him, to withdraw into the next room, and there pray, every one alone, for him, for nothing but their lamentations could make his death uncomfortable.*”

Being left with Mr. Woodnot and Mr. Bostock, he requested the former to look into the cabinet that stood in the room, and take out his will; and having obtained Mr. Woodnot's promise to be his executor for his wife and nieces, he said, *I am now ready to die; and soon after added, Lord, forsake me not, now my strength faileth me; but grant me mercies for the merits of my Jesus. And now, Lord—Lord, now receive my soul;* and with these words he expired so placidly, that neither of his friends, who hung over him, knew of his departure.

With so much serenity was this Christian poet gathered to his fathers, “unspotted of the world, full of alms-deeds, full of humility, and all the examples of a virtuous life.” Wherefore, then, should we weep for the pilgrim who thus early in the summer-time set out for the celes-

tial country, where they whom he loved were gone before, and where his beautiful piety taught him to believe that his mother's arms were longing for her absent son. Although he was young in years, he was rich in good works.

It is not growing, like a tree,
In bulk, doth make man better be.
A lily of the day
Is fairer far in May ;
Although it fall and die that night,
It was the flower and plant of light.

BEN JONSON.

The flower was only transplanted into a heavenly garden, where no storm can ever prevail against it*.

Herbert was buried, according to his own desire, with the singing-service for the burial of the dead, by the singing-men of Sarum. We derive this information from Aubrey, whose uncle, T. Danvers, was at the funeral. The parish Register of Bemerton states, that "Mr. George Herbert, Esq., Parson of Fuggleston and Bemerton, was buried the 3rd of March, 1632." He lies in the chancel, "under no large, nor yet very good marble grave-stone, without any inscription †;" and when an admirer of his virtues and poetry made a visit to the church in 1831, he found the altar raised by a platform of wood, and the pavement entirely concealed.

Herbert, we are told by Walton, who had seen him, was of "a stature inclining towards leanness; his body was very straight, and so far from being cumbered with too much flesh, that he was lean to an extremity. His aspect was cheerful, and his speech and motion did both

* See the "Flower," in the *Temple*.

† Aubrey.

declare him a gentleman; for they were all so meek and obliging, that they purchased love and respect from all that knew him." I may add from Aubrey, that he was of a very fine complexion. The benevolent expression of his countenance is known from his portrait*, to which Spenser's lines on Sir Philip Sidney, may be applied.

A sweet attractive kind of grace,
A full assurance given by looks,
Continual comforts in a face,
The lineaments of Gospel-books.

His manners corresponded with the sweetness of his features. "His life," says his eldest brother, "was most holy and exemplary, insomuch, that about Salisbury, where he lived beneficed for many years, he was little less than sainted. He was not exempt from passion and choler, being infirmities to which all our race is subject; but that excepted, without reproach in all his actions." Anger, we may be assured, could never long be the inmate of so gentle a bosom.

His virtues were active, and adapted to the wants of human life; in the words of one of our greatest divines, when speaking of a departed friend, they form a little volume, which we may constantly carry in our bosom. As a son, he was most amiable; his tender respect to his mother increased with his years; he alleviated her sorrows, covered her imperfections, and comforted her age. In the discharge of his sacred office he was diligent and unwearied; every cottage-threshold was familiar to his feet, and his charity was only bounded

* Prefixed to his "Works," 1709, by G. Sturt.

———— Poems, by R. White.

Bromley's Catalogue of *Engraved Heads*, p. 87.

by his means. The sadness, which he considered one of the most becoming characteristics of a clergyman, was in his own case relieved by a decent and serene mirth; for he said, that nature could not "bear everlasting droopings," and that pleasantness of disposition was "a great way to do good." The writer of the sketch prefixed to his *Remains*, speaks of his "conscientious expense of time, which he ever measured by the pulse, that native watch God has set in every one of us. His eminent temperance and frugality; his private fastings; his mortifications of the body; his extemporary exercises at the sight or visit of a charnel-house, where every bone before the day rises up in judgment against fleshly lust and pride; at the stroke of a passing-bell, when ancient charity used, said he, to run to church and assist the dying Christian with prayers and tears." He was also scrupulously careful in the observance of all appointed fasts, and he welcomed the "dear fast of Lent" in a poem of several stanzas. He suffered no opportunity to escape of inculcating the truths of the Gospel. In the chancel of the Church, we are informed by Aubrey, were many apt sentences of Scripture. At his wife's seat, *My life is hid with Christ in God*. Coloss. iii. 3,—a text which he has taken for the subject of one of his poems; and above, "in a little window blinded within a veil ill-painted," *Thou art my hiding-place*. Psalm xxxii.

Besides his musical recreations, he was very fond of angling, which was then a favourite amusement of many eminent men. Donne was "a great practitioner and patron" of the art: Duport, the Greek professor, styled himself *candidatum arundinis*; and Sir Henry Wotton described angling as "idle time, not idly spent."

Herbert's literary talents are not to be estimated from his productions. "God," he said, "has broken into my study, and taken off my chariot-wheels: I have nothing worthy of God." His youth was devoted to the acquirement of academic praise. In his maturer years, the allurements of a learned Court, and the prospect of fame and honour promised by the favour of the King, served to distract his mind from any great pursuit; and when he entered the Church, he put away all objects of worldly ambition, and only sought to prove himself a true and humble disciple of his Master. His scholarship was sound and elegant; the freedom and vigour of his Latin style were acknowledged by Lord Bacon, and Bishop Andrews carried a Greek letter written by him in his bosom. We may infer that he was also a good mathematician; for in the *Country Parson* he recommends "the mathematics as the only wonder-working knowledge."

Of his acquaintance with Italian, he has only left us a slight testimony, in the translation of Cornaro's *Treatise on Temperance*, a work he undertook at "the request of a noble personage," and of which he sent a copy, not many months before his death, to a few friends who were forming a plan of diet-regulation. The second edition was published at Cambridge, in 1634, with the *Hygiasticon* of Leonard Lessius.

As a poet, he once enjoyed a wonderful popularity; and when Walton wrote, twenty thousand copies of the *Temple* had been circulated. The first edition appeared at Cambridge in 1633*. The history of this work is beautiful. Having taken leave of Mr. Duncon, and intrusted him with a message to "his brother Ferrar,"

* It had reached a seventh in 1656.

he did, says Walton, with so sweet a humility as seemed to exalt him, bow down to Mr. Duncon, and with a thoughtful and contented look, say, "Sir, I pray deliver this little book to my dear brother Ferrar, and tell him he shall find in it a picture of the many spiritual conflicts that have passed between God and my soul, before I could subject mine to the will of Jesus, my Master, in whose service I have now found perfect freedom. Desire him to read it; and then, if he can think it may turn to the advantage of any poor, dejected soul, let it be made public; if not, let him burn it. For I, and it, are less than the least of God's mercies." His poetical character has been drawn, with considerable accuracy, by Baxter. This celebrated non-conformist had, in his youth, been introduced to the notice of Sir Henry Herbert, by whom he was kindly received: but he had not resided at Whitehall more than a month, when he was "glad to be gone," being offended with the negligent observance of the Sabbath. "But I must confess," he says, "after all, that next the Scripture Poems, there are none so savoury to me, as Mr. George Herbert's. I know that Cowley, and others, far excel Herbert in wit and accurate composure; but as Seneca takes with me above all his contemporaries, because he speaketh things by words feelingly and seriously, like a man that is past jest, so Herbert speaks to God, like a man that really believeth in God, and whose business in the world is most with God: heart-work and heaven-work make up his books*."

If Herbert had been less enthusiastic in his devotional feelings, his poems would have been more generally interesting; they are, for the most part, brief prayers,

* From *Poetical Fragments*, &c., 1681.

or paraphrases on Scripture, expressed in verse; and when they were composed, their author must have been frequently in a higher state "than poetry can confer." Yet there is nothing in the *Temple* to authorize the assertion of a modern critic*, that it is "a compound of enthusiasm without sublimity, and conceit without ingenuity or imagination." The pathetic lines on *Employment*, surely demand a more favourable judgment:—

If, as a flower doth spread and die,
 Thou would'st extend me to some good,
 Before I were by frost's extremity
 Nipt in the bud;

The sweetness and the praise were Thine,
 But the extension and the room,
 Which in Thy garland I should fill, were mine
 At the great doom.

For as thou dost impart Thy grace,
 The greater shall our glory be,
 The measure of our joys is in this place,
 The stuff with Thee.

Let me not languish, then, and spend
 A life as barren to Thy praise,
 As is the dust to which that life doth tend,
 But with delays.

All things are busy, only I
 Neither bring honey with the bees,
 Nor flowers to make that, nor the husbandry
 To water these.

I am no link of thy great chain,
 For all my company is as a weed;
 Lord, place me in Thy comfort, give one strain
 To my poor reed.

And these lines upon *Grace* are equally plaintive and

* Headley, in *Select Specimens*

harmonious; the thought in the third stanza is very pleasing, and the concluding prayer of the poet is the more affecting, from the remembrance of its speedy fulfilment:—

My stock lies dead, and no increase

Doth my dull husbandry improve ;

O, let Thy graces, without cease,

Drop from above !

If still the sun should hide his face,

Thy house would but a dungeon prove,

Thy works night's captives; O, let grace

Drop from above !

The dew doth every morning fall,

And shall the dew outstrip Thy dove ?

The dew for which grass cannot call,

Drop from above !

O come, for Thou dost know the way,

Or, if to me Thou wilt not move,

Remove me where I need not say,

Drop from above !

This stanza, from *Content*, has much grace and melody:—

Give me the pliant mind, whose gentle measure

Complies and suits with all estates,

Which can let loose to a crown; and yet with pleasure

Take up within a cloister's gate.

The poem on *Life* is, in the conception, very beautiful, and some of the lines could only have emanated from a mind of true poetical feeling; but the same affected taste which marred the verses upon *Virtue*, is also discoverable here:—

I made a posie while the day ran by ;

Here will I smell my remnant out, and tie

My life within this band :

But time did beckon to the flowers, and they
 By noon most cunningly did steal away
 And wither in my hand.

My hand was next to them, and then my heart.
 I took, without more thinking, in good part,
 Time's gentle admonition :

Who did so sweetly Death's sad taste convey,
 Making my mind to smell my fatal day,
 Yet sug'ring the suspicion.

Farewell, dear flowers ! Sweetly your time ye spent,
 Fit while ye lived, for smell and ornament,
 And after death for cures.

I follow straight, without complaints or grief,
 Since if my scent be good, I care not if
 It be as brief as yours.

Of the epithets and individual thoughts that ever distinguish the work of a true poet, the *Temple* affords more specimens than I have space to enumerate. But one exquisite verse may be quoted, in which the appearance of the Church of God is contrasted with the pomps of earth :—

And when I view abroad both regiments,
 The world's and Thine ;
 Thine clad with simpleness and sad events,
 The other fine, &c. *Frailty.*

How the blessed names of those who have suffered and died in defence of our religion arise to our remembrance, when we read these words ! We think of Latimer, of Cranmer, and Ridley, and the glorious company of sainted martyrs, whom they guided unto eternal glory.

The next poem is given only as an example of the meek and Scriptural tone of the author's mind.

UNKINDNESS.

Lord, make me coy and tender to offend ;
In friendship, first I think if that agree
Which I intend,

Unto my friend's intent and end
I would not use a friend as I use Thee.

If any touch my friend, or his good name,
It is my honour and my love to free
His blasted fame
From the least spot or thought of blame.
I could not use a friend as I use Thee.

When that my friend pretendeth to a place,
I quit my interest and leave it free ;
But when Thy grace
Sues for my heart, I Thee displace ;
Nor would I use a friend as I use Thee.

Yet, can a friend what Thou hast done fulfil ?
Or write in brass, " My God upon a tree,
" His blood did spill,
" Only to purchase my good will :"
Yet use I not my foes as I use Thee.

These specimens from the *Temple* cannot be brought to a close in more appropriate words than Walton's eloquent eulogy of the work, in the *Life of Donne*. " It is a book," he says, " in which, by declaring his own spiritual conflicts, he hath comforted and raised many a dejected and discomposed soul, and charmed them into sweet and quiet thoughts; a book, by the reading whereof, and the assistance of that spirit that seemed to inspire the author, the reader may attain habits of peace and piety, and all the gifts of the Holy Ghost and heaven, and may, by still reading, still keep those sacred fires burning upon the altar of so pure a heart

as shall free it from the anxieties of this world, and keep it fixed upon things that are above."

The writer would have wished no higher praise, yet the extracts I have given may incline the reader to consider the *Temple* deserving of study, for a better reason than that for which Pope is said frequently to have perused it*. A few of the poems were translated into Latin, and published, with others, by W. Dillingham†.

Granger asserts, that the poems annexed to the *Temple* were written by Crashaw; but the translator of the *Sospetto d'Herode* could never have subdued his genius to the level of the Synagogue. Granger may have been led into error by Crashaw's lines *On Mr. G. Herbert's Book*, of which he was a warm admirer. Sir John Hawkins, in his edition of Walton's *Angler*, says, that Christopher Harvey was the author; but whether he was the same individual who was Rector of Clifton in Warwickshire, and died in 1663, cannot be determined. The doubt is not worth the solving.

Herbert's circle of acquaintance embraced some of his most eminent contemporaries. It will be sufficient to name Sir Henry Wotton, the friend of Milton, Sir Henry Goodyere, Dudley, the third Lord North, and James Duport. Sir H. Goodyere was the frequent correspondent of Donne, who says, in a letter addressed to him, "Mr. George Herbert is here at the receipt of your letter, and with service to you, tells you that all at Uvedall House are well‡." Lord North was one of the most distinguished noblemen of the Court of James the First; but, having dissipated the larger portion of

* *Essay on the Genius and Writings of Pope*, p. 85.

† *Poemata Varii Argumenti Partim e Georgio Herberto Latinè Reddita*.

‡ *Letters*, 1651, p. 236.

his estate, he retired to the country, and lived in penitence, or at least in solitude, on the remainder. He published a volume of *Miscellanies* in 1645, under the title of *A Forest of Varieties*, containing, among other poems, a series of devotions, in imitation of the 119th Psalm. In the introduction, he speaks of the "divinest Herbert*."

Mrs. Herbert survived her husband, and "continued, says Walton, his disconsolate widow about six years, bemoaning herself, and complaining that she had lost the delight of her eyes." Thus she continued, "till conversation and time had so moderated her sorrows that she became the happy wife of Sir Robert Cook, of Highnam, in the county of Gloucester. But she never forgot to mention the name of Mr. George Herbert, and say that name must live in her memory till she put off mortality." She also "preserved many of Mr. Herbert's private writings, which she intended to make public; but they and Highnam House were burnt together by the late rebels, and so lost to posterity." Aubrey's account of their disappearance is not so satisfactory. Herbert, he says, wrote a folio, in Latin, which, because the parson of Hineham could not read, his widow (then wife to Sir Robert Cook) condemned to the use of good housewifery. This intelligence was communicated to Aubrey by Mr. Arnold Cook, one of the sons of Sir Robert, whom he had desired to ask his mother-in-law for Herbert's MSS.

* Sir Egerton Brydges has given copious extracts from this volume, in the *Peers of James*, 4to., p. 349, &c.

HABINGTON, VAUGHAN, &c.

WILLIAM HABINGTON was born at Hendlip, in Worcestershire, on the 4th or 5th of November, 1605. His name has derived an historical interest from the imputed connexion of his father with the Gunpowder Plot, some of the agents of which he was accused of concealing in his house. But this charge rests on very doubtful authority; and Mr. Nash, the author of the *History of Worcestershire*, discovered at Hendlip several letters, written by Habington to his wife and friends, declaring his entire ignorance of the conspiracy. William was educated at St. Omer's, and afterwards at Paris. To relieve himself from the solicitations of the Jesuits, who sought to win him to their order, he returned to England, and finished his studies under the direction of his father, who was a scholar and a man of industry. Through the care of his affectionate tutor, he "grew into an accomplished gentleman;" and at an early age married Lucia, daughter of Lord Powis, and who is said by Winstanley, to have been a lady of rare endowments and beauty. Habington seems to have appreciated his good fortune, and to have taken no part in the political tumults which so afflicted his country. The insinuation of Wood, that he "did run with the times, and was not unknown to Oliver, the Usurper," is refuted by the character of his poetry, and the nature of his creed. There could be no bond of union between the papist and the puritan. He died November 30, 1654*, and was buried in the family vault at Hendlip.

* Chalmers says, November 13th, 1645; but he gives no reason for rejecting the date of Anthony Wood, who received his information from the poet's son.

Time has dealt less harshly with his rhymes than with those of more gifted bards. His poems have been twice reprinted within a few years; by Chalmers, in the *British Poets*, and separately, by C. A. Elton, at Bristol. His own opinion of their merits was very humble. They were at first privately circulated among his friends, and the press afterwards bound "together what fancy had scattered into many loose papers." "Had I slept," he says, "in the silence of my acquaintance, and affected no study beyond what the chase or field allows, poetry had then been no scandal upon me, and the love of learning no suspicion of ill husbandry. If these lines want that courtship which insinuates itself into the favour of great men, best, they partake of my modesty; if satire, to win applause with the envious multitude, they express my content, which maliceth none the fruition of that they esteem happy. The great charm of his writings is their purity and domestic tenderness; the religion of his fancy is never betrayed into any unbecoming mirth, or rapturous enthusiasm. He is always amiable, simple, and unaffected: if he has not the ingenuity of some of his rivals, he is also free from their conceits. Gold ceases to be of any real value when it is only fashioned into baubles. His prose, however, excels his verse. The character of a Holy Man will be accepted by all Christians as a delightful portrait of sincere and tolerant piety.

A HOLY MAN

Is only happy, for infelicity and sin were born twins; or rather, like some prodigy with two bodies, both draw and expire the same breath. Catholic faith is the foundation on which he erects Religion, knowing it a ruinous madness to build in the air of a private spirit, or on the sands of any new schism. His impiety is not so bold as to bring divinity down to the mistake of reason, or to deny those mysteries his apprehension reacheth

not. His obedience moves still by direction of the magistrate; and should conscience inform him that the command is unjust, he judgeth it nevertheless high treason, by rebellion, to make good his tenets; as it were the basest cowardice, by dissimulation of religion, to preserve temporal respects. He knows human policy but a crooked rule of action, and, therefore, by a distrust of his own knowledge, attains it; confounding with supernatural illumination, the opinionated judgment of the wise. In prosperity he greatly admires the bounty of the Almighty Giver, and useth, not abuseth, plenty; but in adversity he remains unshaken, and, like some eminent mountain, hath his head above the clouds. For his happiness is not meteor-like, exhaled from the vapours of this world, but it shines a fixt star, which when by misfortune it appears to fall, only casts away the slimy matter. Poverty he neither fears nor covets, but cheerfully entertains, imagining it the fire which tries virtue; nor how tyrannically soever it usurp on him doth he pay to it a sigh or wrinkle; for he who suffers want without reluctancy, may be poor, not miserable. He sees the covetous prosper by usury, yet waxeth not lean with envy; and when the posterity of the impious flourish, he questions not the Divine justice; for temporal rewards distinguish not ever the merits of men. * * * Fame he weighs not, but esteems a smoke, yet such as carries with it the sweetest odour, and riseth usually from the sacrifice of our best actions. Pride he disdains, when he finds it swelling in himself, but easily forgiveth it in another. * * * He doth not malice the over-spreading growth of his equals, but pities, not despiseth, the fall of any man; esteeming yet no storm of fortune dangerous, but what is raised through our own demerit. * * * In conversation, his carriage is neither plausible to flattery, nor reserved to rigour, but he so demeans himself as created for society. In solitude he remembers his better part is angelical, and, therefore, his mind practiseth the best discourse without assistance of inferior organs! He is never merry, but still modest; not dissolved into indecent laughter, or tickled with wit, scurrilous or injurious. He cunningly searcheth into the virtues of others, and liberally commends them; but buries the vices of the imperfect in a cha-

ritable silence, whose manners he reforms, not by invectives, but example. In prayer he is frequent, not apparent; yet as he labours not the opinion, so he fears not the scandal of being thought good. He every day travels his meditations up to Heaven, and never finds himself wearied with the journey; but when the necessities of nature return him down to earth, he esteems it a place he is condemned to. * * * * To live he knows a benefit, and the contempt of it ingratitude, and therefore loves, but not dotes on life. Death, how deformed soever an aspect it wears, he is not frightened with, since it not annihilates but unclouds the soul. He, therefore, stands every moment prepared to die; and though he freely yields up himself when age or sickness summon him, yet he with more alacrity puts off his earth when the profession of faith crowns him a martyr.

HENRY VAUGHAN was born in Wales, in 1621, and in his seventeenth year was entered of Jesus College, Oxford, from whence, after a residence of two years, he was removed by his father to one of the Inns of Court in London, where he studied the law, until the commencement of the civil war, when, we are told by Anthony Wood, "he was taken home by his friends, and followed the pleasant paths of poetry and philology." He afterwards applied himself to physic, and became an eminent practitioner in his native place. Thus his life glided harmlessly and beneficially away, at a distance from the miseries under which so many of his fellow-creatures were suffering. He lived in the neighbourhood of Brecknock; and in the *Olor Iscanus* are frequent invitations to his friends to partake of his rustic pleasures. He died, Wood thinks, on the 29th of April, 1695, and was buried in the parish-church of Llansenfried, about two miles from Brecknock.

Vaughan's poetry has never received the praise it

deserves. Mr. Campbell pronounces him one of the harshest of the inferior order of the school of conceit; but to his sacred poems, a milder criticism is due: they show considerable originality and picturesque grace. He was an imitator of Herbert, of whom he makes affectionate mention, and whom he resembles in the negligence of his versification, and the inappropriateness of his imagery. But he occasionally swept the harp with a master's hand: what an affecting solemnity runs through these stanzas:—

They are all gone into the world of light !

And I alone sit lingering here ;

Their very memory is fair and bright,

And my sad thoughts doth clear.

It glows and glitters in my cloudy breast,

Like stars upon some gloomy grove,

Or those faint beams in which this hill is drest,

After the sun's remove.

I see them walking in an air of glory,

Whose light doth trample on my days:

My days, which are at best but dull and hoary,

Mere glimmering and decays.

O holy Hope! and high Humility,

High as the heavens above :

These are your walks, and you have show'd them me

To kindle my cold love.

Dear beauteous Death ! the jewel of the just,

Shining no where but in the dark ;

What mysteries do lie beyond thy dust,

Could man outlook that mark !

He that hath found some fledg'd bird's nest, may know

At first sight if the bird be flown ;

But what fair well, or grove, it sings in now,

That is to him unknown.

O, Father of eternal life, and all
 Created glories under thee !
 Resume thy spirit from this world of thrall
 Into true liberty.

Either disperse these mists which blot and fill
 My perspective as they pass,
 Or else remove me hence unto that Hill
 Where I shall need no glass.

The image of the bird, in the 6th stanza, is very charming. The last verse is imitated from Herbert's poem on *Grace*.

THE RETREAT.

HAPPY those early days, when I
 Shined in my angel-infancy.
 Before I understood this place,
 Appointed for my second race,
 Or taught my soul to fancy ought
 But a white, celestial thought,—
 When yet I had not walk'd above
 A mile or two from my first love,
 And looking back (at that short space)
 Could see a glimpse of his bright face.
 When on some gilded cloud or flower
 My gazing soul would dwell an hour ;
 And in those weaker glories spy
 Some shadows of eternity.

Oh, how I long to travel back,
 And tread again that ancient track !
 That I might once more reach that plain,
 Where first I left my glorious train,
 From whence the enlightened spirit sees
 The shady City of Palm Trees.

These lines will find an echo in many bosoms, for the same aspiration must have risen to the lips of every one. But we know that "the enlightened spirit" be-

longs more to the maturity of age than to the inexperienced innocence of childhood; and to the eye of the Christian pilgrim, in the most desolate path of his wanderings, "the shady City of Palm Trees" is visible, and the blackness of the remote horizon often glows with the orient light of the City of Paradise.

THE WREATH.

Addressed to the Redeemer.

SINCE I in storms most used to be,
And seldom yielded flowers,
How shall I get a wreath for Thee
From these rude barren hours?

The softer dressings of the spring,
Or summer's later store,
I will not for Thy temples bring,
Which thorns, not roses, wore;

But a twined wreath of grief and praise,
Praise soil'd with tears, and tears again
Shining with joy, like dewy days,
This day I bring for all Thy pain,
Thy causeless pain, and as sad death,
Which sadness breathes in the most vain,
O, not in vain! now beg Thy breath,
Thy quickening breath, which gladly bears
Through saddest clouds to that glad place
Where cloudless quires sing without tears,
Sing Thy just praise and see Thy face!

A pretty verse on the burial of an infant should not be omitted:—

Blest infant bud whose blossom-life,
Did only look about and fall,
Weary'd out with harmless strife
Of milk and tears, the food of all.

RICHARD CRASHAW.

AFTER an anxious search in all the accessible sources of information, I am able to tell little of one of whom every lover of poetry must desire to know so much. The day of his birth and of his decease are involved in equal mystery.

Crashaw was born in London. His father was an eminent Divine, and Preacher at the Temple. His works, however, brought him more fame than profit, and he confessed that he had spent his patrimony in buying books, and his time in scribbling them. At the close of the reign of Elizabeth he had also been deprived of a "little vicarage*." But his learning and virtues procured for him the esteem of many learned and excellent men†, and particularly of Sir Randolph Crew, and Sir Henry Yelverton‡, by whom his son Richard was placed on

* *A Discourse on Popishe Corruption Requireinge a Kingly Reformation*; among the MS. Books in the Royal Library. See Casly's Catalogue.

† He was intimate with Archbishop Usher, as an extract from a letter to that Prelate will show:—"I lent you *Josseline de Vitis Archiep. Cant.*, in folio, which you said you lent to Dr. Mocket, and I believe it; yet I could never get it, and now I find my book at Mr. Edwards his shop, in Duke Lane, and he saith he bought it with Dr. Mocket's library, but I cannot have it. Happily you might, by your testimony, prevail to get it me, for I charged him not to sell it. I pray think of it as you go that way. Thus longing to see you, and till you send me word what day you will be here, I commend us unto God, and am,
Yours in Christ,

WILLIAM CRASHAW."

Appendix to Parr's *Life of Usher*.

‡ Sir Henry Yelverton was appointed Solicitor-General soon after 1613, and Attorney-General in 1616. In 1625, he was one of the Judges of the King's Bench, and subsequently of the Common Pleas. A curious

the foundation of the Charter House School, where he highly distinguished himself under Brooks, a celebrated master of that day, whom he afterwards addressed in an epigram, full of attachment and respect. I had hoped, from a reference to the Registers of the School, to have determined the period of his admission, but they contain no entry before 1680. How long he continued there is equally uncertain. He was elected a scholar of Pembroke Hall, March 26, 1632*, and yet we find him lamenting the premature death of his friend, William Herrys, a fellow of the same College, which happened in the October of 1631. Herrys had been originally entered of Christ's, and his relations were persons of property and consideration, in the county of Essex. Crashaw calls him the sweetest among men, and mourned his fate in five epitaphs, one of which was in Latin.

In 1633 he took his Bachelor's Degree, and, in 1634, published anonymously, a volume of *Epigrammata Sacra*, inscribed to Benjamin Laney, the Master of Pembroke Hall. In the civil war, Laney was deprived of his situation, and suffered much persecution and many hardships for his loyalty.

The guides of the poet's youthful studies were always esteemed, and their memory preserved in his heart. Of Mr. Tournay, the tutor of Pembroke, he spoke in grateful language, as of one who merited his respect †.

narrative, written by himself, "of what passed on his being restored to the King's favour, in 1609," is printed in the fifteenth volume of the *Archæologia*, p. 27.

* From the College Register, quoted in Cole's MSS.

† *Tutori Summe Observando*.—"We have had some doings here of late about one of Pembroke Hall, who preaching in St. Mary's, about the beginning of Lent, upon that text James ii, 22, seemed to avouch the

In 1635 he prefixed a copy of verses to Robert Shelford's *Five Pious and Learned Discourses*. Shelford was of Peterhouse, and Rector of Ringsfield, in Suffolk. Crashaw's recommendation of this work requires notice, for it was considered to advocate doctrines inimical to the established church. Archbishop Usher condemns it with indignation, in a letter to Dr. Ward, Sept. 15, 1635. "But, while we strive here to maintain the purity of our ancient truth, how cometh it to pass that you at Cambridge do cast such stumbling-blocks in our way, by publishing into the world such rotten stuff as Shelford hath vented in his *Five Discourses*; wherein he hath so carried himself *ut famosi Perni amanuensem possis agnoscere*. The Jesuits of England sent over the book hither to confirm our papists in their obstinacy, and to assure them that we are now coming home to them as fast as we can. I pray God this sin be not deeply laid to their charge, who give an occasion to our blind thus to stumble*." This fact enables us to trace the gradually growing inclination of Crashaw to the Roman Catholic faith. His mystical and enthusiastic

insufficiency of faith to justification, and to impugn the doctrine of our 11th article, of Justification by faith only; for which he was convented by the Vice-Chancellor, who was willing to accept of an easy acknowledgment: but the same party preaching his Latin sermon, *pro Gradu*, the last week, upon Rom. iii, 28, he said, he came not *palinodiam canere, sed eandem cantilenam canere*, which moved our Vice-Chancellor, Dr. Love, to call for his sermon, which he refused to deliver. Whereupon, upon Wednesday last, being Barnaby Day, the day appointed for the admission of the Bachelors of Divinity, which must answer *Die Comitiorum*, he was stayed by the major part of the suffrages of the Doctors of the faculty. * * * The truth is, there are some Heads among us, that are great abettors of M. Tournay, the party above mentioned, who, no doubt, are backed by others."—*Letter from Ward of Sidney Coll., June, 1634, to Archbishop Usher. Life by Parr, p. 470.*

* Master Shelford hath of late affirmed in print, that the Pope was never yet defined to be the Antichrist by any Synode.—Huntley's *Breviate*, third edition, 1637, p. 308.

manner of life, indeed, powerfully predisposed him to lend a willing ear to the gorgeous deceptions of a poetical religion. Every day he passed several hours in the solitude of St. Mary's Church. "In the temple of God, under his wing, he led his life in St. Mary's Church, near St. Peter's College, under Tertullian's roof of angels; there he made his nest more gladly than David's swallow near the house of God; where, like a primitive saint, he offered more prayers in the night, than others usually offer in the day*."

On the 20th of November, 1636, he removed to Peterhouse, of which he was made Fellow in 1637, and Master of Arts in the following year. Of his occupations in these seasons of tranquility, the only fruits are to be found in his poems; but his various acquirements prove him to have been something more than a dreamer. In 1641, Wood says that he took degrees at Oxford. He also entered into Holy Orders, and soon became a preacher of great energy and power. His richness of diction, and animation of style, were well calculated to render him an effective minister of the Gospel.

Stormy days were swiftly coming on. In August, 1642, the University had testified its loyalty by sending the public plate to the King to coin into money; and Cromwell, then member of Parliament for the Town of Cambridge, is supposed to have succeeded in intercepting a portion of the treasure. An act of devotion to the royal cause was not likely to be forgotten. In 1644, the University was converted into a garrison for the Parliament, principally under the superintendence of

* Pref. to *Steps to the Temple*, 1646.

Cromwell. "That his soldiers," says Mr. Godwin, "were not debauched or licentious, is shown by the most indubitable testimony:" and he proceeds to confirm his assertion in a strange manner, by admitting that they frequently displayed the fervour of their zeal, in the demolishing of images and painted windows. The hand of the spoiler was, of a truth, stretched out with impunity; the beautiful grove of Jesus College was cut down, and the precious collection of coins taken away from St. John's. But the animosity of the Sectaries was not exhausted in these excesses. In the same year they prepared to introduce those changes into the system of the University, which their defenders affirm to have been demanded by the circumstances of the times. The direction of these alterations was intrusted to the Earl of Manchester, whose courtly elegance and winning affability, have gained the applause of Clarendon. Crashaw was ejected from his fellowship on the 8th of April, 1644, and was succeeded by Howard Beecher. Joseph Beaumont, the author of *Psyche*, was banished on the same day.

Whether he endured this unexpected calamity with patience and resignation, we are left to conjecture. Cambridge had been his abode for twelve years: his own College was full of old familiar faces, and every spot in its neighbourhood must have been endeared by delightful associations. He had, besides, been accustomed so long to indulge the romance of his imagination, that the intelligence of his dismissal broke on him like a hasty awakening from a pleasant dream. How he supported himself after leaving Cambridge is not known; his friends were as poor and helpless as himself. About this time he is considered by Carter to

have seceded from the Protestant Church*. Carter, after mentioning his conversion, adds, that "though a person of exalted piety, yet he was a disgrace to the list." We must not be too harsh in our censure of his conduct. The seed that took deep root in the poet's bosom, had also sprung up and flourished for a little while in the breasts of Jeremy Taylor and Chillingworth, who were both, for a short period, Catholics. In the *Legenda Ligneæ* Crashaw is termed an active ring-leader, and his motives are attacked with great virulence and malignity.

"Master Crashaw (son to the London Divine), and sometimes Fellow of St. Peterhouse, in Cambridge, is another slip of the times that is transplanted into Rome. This peevish, silly seeker, glided away from his principles in a poetical vein of fancy, and an impertinent curiosity; and finding that verses and measured flattery took and much pleased some female wits, Crashaw crept by degrees into favour and acquaintance with some court ladies * *, and got first the estimation of an innocent, harmless convert; and a purse being made by some deluded, vain-glorious ladies and their friends, the poet was despatched in a pilgrimage to Rome, where if he had found in the See Pope Urban the Eighth, instead of Pope Innocent, he might possibly have received a greater number and a better quantity of benedictions. But Innocent being more harsh and dry, the poor small poet, Crashaw, met with none of the generation and kindred of Mécænas, nor any great blessing from his Holiness, which misfortune puts the pitiful wire-drawer into a humour of admiring his own raptures; and in this fancy, like Narcissus, he is fallen in love with his own shadow, conversing with himself in

* *History of the University of Cambridge.*

verse, and admiring the birth of his own brains. He is only laughed at, or at most pitied, by his new patrons, who, conceiving him unworthy of any preferment in their Church, have given him leave to live like a lean swine, and almost ready to starve in poor mendicant quality*."

One of the "Court ladies" particularly alluded to, was the Countess of Denbigh† in whose conversion to the Papal creed he appears to have been instrumental. But the charges of dishonesty and desire of gain, so vehemently urged against him, are unfounded; whatever his sentiments may have been, he was not drawn from the faith of his father by those "chords of gold and silver twist," which the writer of the *Legenda* says "fetched over so many." Crashaw did not remain long in England; he retired to France, where his sufferings were very severe.

An unknown and humble scholar could not hope to obtain, in a foreign land, the assistance denied him in his own. In 1646, Cowley, then Secretary to Lord Jermyn, found him in Paris, and in great poverty. Cowley had been his companion at Cambridge, and in this hour of affliction is said to have made him partaker of his slender fortunes. Crashaw's introduction to the Queen of Charles the First, has been usually attributed to the influence of Cowley; but Dodd, the Catholic Church-historian, ascribes it to Dr. Gough and Mr. Car. Cowley's connexion with the fortunes of the King point him out as the most probable benefactor. From the Queen, Crashaw received letters of recommendation to Italy, where he became Secretary to a

* *Legenda Lignea*, Lond. 1652, p. 169.

† Among his poems is a letter to this Lady, *against irresolution and delay in matters of religion*.

Cardinal at Rome. Cole thinks that he was acting in this capacity in 1648, a surmise undoubtedly well founded, although the reference to Carier's Missive to James must be erroneous, since it was published more than thirty years before; and George Hakewill's learned reply to it appeared in 1616.

Of Crashaw's condition in Italy, a brief, but interesting account is given by Dr. John Bargrave, who had been his fellow-collegian at Peterhouse, and who was also driven from Cambridge by the warrant of the Earl of Manchester*. Upon his expulsion he went abroad, and Wood calls him a great traveller.

"When I first went of my four times to Rome, there were three or four revolvers to the Roman Church, that had been Fellows of Peterhouse, in Cambridge, with myself. The name of one of them was Mr. R. Crashaw, who was of the Seguita (as their term is), that is, an attendant, or one of the followers of Cardinal Palotta, for which he had a salary of crowns by the month (as the custom is), but no diet. Mr. Crashaw infinitely commended his Cardinal, but complained extremely of the wickedness of those of his retinue, of which he, having his Cardinal's ear, complained to him; upon which, the Italians fell so far out with him, that the Cardinal, to secure his life, was fain to put him from his service, and procuring him some small employ at the Lady's of Loretto, whither he went in pilgrimage in the summer-time, and, over-heating himself, died in a few weeks after he came thither; and it was doubtful whether he was not poisoned†."

In the margin of the folio edition of Cowley's Works,

* Cole's MSS., vol. 42, p. 114, 115, 125, 126, 127.

† The MS. from which the above extract is taken is printed in Todd's *Works of Milton*.

he is said to have died of a fever at Loretto, but the time is not mentioned. He was certainly dead before 1652, for in that year his *Carmen Deo Nostro, Te Decet Hymnus*, &c., were published at Paris, by his friend, Thomas Car, to whom the poet's manuscripts appear to have been bequeathed; for he says,—

————— 'Twas his intent
That what his riches penn'd, poor Car should print.

His fate was wept by Cowley in a strain of noble tenderness and enthusiasm.

Poet and Saint! To thee alone are given
The two most sacred names of earth and heaven,
The hard and rarest union which can be*,
Next that of Godhead with humanity.
Long did the Muses banish'd slaves abide,
And built their pyramids to human pride;
Like Moses, thou, though spells and charms withstand,
Hast brought them nobly back to their Holy Land.

Hail, Bard triumphant, and some care bestow
On us, the poets militant below,
Oppos'd by our old enemy, adverse chance,
Attack'd by envy and by ignorance.
Thou, from low earth in nobler flames didst rise,
And like Elijah mount alive the skies.

The few further particulars it is in my power to communicate respecting his manners and acquirements, are chiefly collected from the brief notices of him by Car, who boasts that "sweet Crashaw was his friend, he Crashaw's brother." He was well versed in the Hebrew, Greek, Latin, Spanish, and Italian languages, the two last of which he mastered almost by

* Folio edition, 1669. This line cannot surely be correct. Might not Cowley have written

The hardest, rarest, union which can be?

his own unaided efforts. The poets of Greece and Rome were his favourite study, and he quoted from them by memory, with singular readiness and exactness. His accomplishments were on a par with his learning; he was skilled in music, drawing, engraving, and painting; and we learn from some verses, that he employed his talents for the amusement of his friends. The Sacred Poems printed at Paris in 1652, are adorned by some vignettes, "first made with his own hand," and engraved, in one or two instances, with great spirit. The designs, indeed, like the poetry, are characteristic of the author. The picture illustrating the verses to the Countess of Denbigh, "persuading her to resolution in religion," represents a heart fastened by a heavy padlock; and the sorrow of Mary Magdalen is portrayed by a heart distilling drops of blood.

In his habits he was temperate, even to severity, taking no thought of the luxuries, scarcely of the necessities of life. He lived, says his affectionate eulogist,

Above in the air,
A very bird of Paradise—no care
Had he of earthly trash; what might suffice
To fit his soul for heavenly exercise,
Sufficed him —————
What he might eat or wear he took no thought,
His needful food he rather found than sought*.

It has been supposed, from a passage in Selden's *Table Talk*, that he once entertained an intention of writing against the stage; but it is clear, from an Epigram upon two of Ford's tragedies, that he was at one period a student, if not an admirer, of the drama.

* Car's Prefatory verses to the *Carmen Deo Nostro*.

His secession from our Church is to be deeply deplored; but we have the zealous testimony of Cowley that the virtues of his after-life did not discredit the Mother whom he had forsaken.

Crashaw's poetical character has been drawn at considerable length, and with great ingenuity, by Pope, in a letter to his friend, Henry Cromwell*.

“ It seems that my late mention of Crashaw, and my quotation from him, has moved your curiosity. I, therefore, send you the whole author, who has held a place among my other books of this nature for some years; in which time, having read him twice or thrice, I find him one of those whose works may just deserve reading. I take this poet to have writ like a gentleman, that is at leisure hours, and more to keep out of idleness than to establish a reputation; so that nothing regular or just can be expected from him. All that regards design, form, fable (which is the soul of poetry), all that concerns exactness or consent of parts (which is the body), will probably be wanting; only pretty conceptions, fine metaphors, glittering expressions, and something of a neat cast of verse (which are properly the dress, gems, or loose ornaments of poetry), may be found in these verses. This is, indeed, the case of most other poetical writers of *Miscellanies*; nor can it well be otherwise, since no man can be a true poet, who writes for diversion only. These authors should be considered as *versifiers and witty men* rather than as *poets*; and under this head will only fall the Thoughts, the Expression, and the Numbers. These are only the pleasing parts of poetry, which may be judged of at a view, and comprehended all at once; and (to express

* *Literary Correspondence*, vol. i., p. 302; 1735.

myself like a painter) their colouring entertains the sight, but the lines and life of the picture are not to be inspected too narrowly.

“This author formed himself upon Petrarch, or rather upon Marino. His thoughts, one may observe, in the main, are pretty, but oftentimes far-fetched, and too often strained and stiffened, to make them appear the greater. For men are never so apt to think a thing great, as when it is odd or wonderful; and inconsiderate authors would rather be admired than understood. This ambition of surprising a reader is the true natural cause of all Fustian, or Bombast, in Poetry. To confirm what I have said, you need but look into his first poem of the *Weeper*, where the 2nd, 4th, 6th, 14th, 21st stanzas are as sublimely dull as the 7th, 8th, 9th, 16th, 17th, 20th, and 23rd stanzas of the same copy, are soft and pleasing. And if these last want any thing, it is an easier and more unaffected expression. The remaining thoughts in that poem might have been spared, being either but repetitions or very trivial and mean. And by this example, one may guess at all the rest to be like this; a mixture of tender, gentle thoughts, and suitable expressions, of forced and inextricable conceits, and of needless fillers up to the rest. From all which, it is plain this author writ fast, and set down what came uppermost. A reader may skim off the froth, and use the clear underneath; but if he goes too deep, will meet with a mouthful of dregs: either the top or bottom of him are good for little, but what he did, in his *own natural middle-way*, is best.

“To speak of his numbers is a little difficult, they are so various and irregular, and mostly Pindarick: 'tis evident his heroic verse (the best example of which

is his *Music's Duel*) is carelessly made up; but one may imagine, from what it now is, that had he taken more care, it had been musical and pleasing enough; not extremely majestic, but sweet. And the time considered, of his writing, he was (even as incorrect as he is) none of the worst versificators.

“I will just observe that the best pieces of this author are a paraphrase of Psalm xxiii., on *Lessius*, Epitaph on M. Ashton, Wishes to his Supposed Mistress, and the *Dies Iræ*.”

This criticism, while it is generally fair to the *letter* of Crashaw's poetry, is unjust to its *spirit*, and must have been written in forgetfulness of his peculiar temperament and disposition. Whatever he did was done with all his might, and no person who recollects that the *Steps to the Temple* were composed during moments of devotional ardour in St. Mary's Church, will consider him to have *writ like a gentleman, and at leisure hours, to keep out idleness*. The praise throughout the letter is cold and languid. Such phrases as “a neat cast of verse,” and “none of the worst versificators,” are not surely applicable to the translator of the *Sospetto d'Herode*, and the *Prolusion* of Strada. I am far from insinuating against Pope any intentional depreciation of the genius of Crashaw (the malevolent attacks of Philips have been satisfactorily repelled by Hayley); but it may be doubted whether his tastes and prejudices did not unfit him to deliver an impartial judgment on the merits of Crashaw. His own imagination was always in subjection to his taste, flowing in a bold and glittering stream, yet rarely, except in the Epistle to Abelard, overleaping the channel through

which he directed its course. Thus even his passion was polished, and terror itself assumed an elegance under his pencil. "From the dregs of Crashaw, of Carew, of Herbert, and others (for it is well known he was a great reader of these poets)," remarks Warton, "Pope has very judiciously collected gold." In these searches after hidden treasure, the magnificent fragment from Marino could not have escaped his notice; and it is odd that he omitted to specify it among the "best pieces" of the author. The Suspicion of Herod has always been estimated as a mere translation; but it may not be uninteresting to show that many parts of it are enriched by the fancy of Crashaw. This can be easily done by accompanying the English version with the parallel passages in Italian.

He saw heaven blossom with a new-born light,
On which, as on a glorious stranger, gazed
The golden eyes of night.

Vede dal ciel con peregrino raggio
 Spiccarsi ancor miracolosa stella,
 Che verso Bettelem dritto il viaggio
 Segnando va folgoreggiante, e bella.

He saw how in that blest day-bearing night
 The heaven-rebuked shades made haste away,
How bright a dawn of angels with new light
Amazed the midnight world, and made a day
Of which the morning knew not.

Vede della felice santa notte
 Le tacit' ombre, i tenebrosi orrori,
 Dalle voci del ciel percosse, e rotte,
 E vinti dagli angelici splendori.

And when Alecto, the most terrible of the infernal sisters, ascends to earth at the command of Satan:—

Heaven saw her rise, and saw Hell in the sight,
The field's fair eyes saw her, and saw no more,
But shut their flowery lids for ever.

Parvero i fiori intorno, e la verdura
 Sentir forza di peste, ira di verno.

The soliloquy of Satan, though wonderfully close, has an air of original inspiration. It reads like a copy by Milton:—

While new thoughts boiled in his enraged breast,
 His gloomy bosom's darkest character
 Was in his shady forehead seen exprest.
 The forehead's shade in grief's expression there,
 Is what in sign of joy among the blest
 The face's lightening, or a smile, is here.

Those stings of care that his strong heart opprest,
 A desperate "Oh, me!" drew from his deep breast.

Oh me! (thus bellowed he) oh me! what great
 Portents before mine eyes their powers advance?
 And serves my purer sight only to beat
 Down my proud thought, and leave it in a trance?
 Frown I; and can Great Nature keep her seat?
 And the gay stars lead on their golden dance?

Can his attempts above still prosp'rous be,
 Auspicious still, in spite of Hell and me?

He has my heaven (what would he more?) whose bright
 And radiant sceptre this bold hand should bear,
And for the never-fading fields of light,*
 My fair inheritance, he confines me here,
 To this dark house of shades, horror, and night,
 To draw a long-lived death, where all my cheer
 Is the solemnity my sorrow wears,
 That mankind's torment waits upon my tears.

* Che più può farmi omai chi la celeste
 Reggia mi tolse, e i regni i miei lucenti?

Dark dusky man he needs must single forth,
 To make the partner of his own pure ray ;
 And should we powers of Heaven, spirits of worth,
*Bow our bright heads before a king of clay**,
 It shall not be, said I, and clomb the north,
 Where never wing of angel yet made way—
 What though I missed my blow ! yet I strook high,
 And to dare something is some victory.

Art thou not Lucifer ? he to whom the droves
 Of stars that gild the morn in charge were given ?
 The nimblest of the lightning-winged loves ?
 The fairest and the first-born smile of Heaven ?
 Look in what pomp the mistress-planet moves,
 Rev'rently circled by the lesser seven !
 Such, and so rich, the flames that from thine eyes
 Opprest the common people of the skies.

How grandly wrought up is the apostrophe to the
 fallen Spirit !

Disdainful wretch ! how hath one bold sin cost
 Thee all the beauties of thy once bright eyes !
 How hath *one black eclipse cancell'd and crost*
The glories that did gild thee on thy rise !
Proud morning of a perverse day ! how lost
 Art thou unto thyself, thou too self-wise
 Narcissus ! foolish Phaeton ! who for all
 Thy *high-aim'd hopes, gain'dst but a flaming fall.*

Misero, e come il tuo splendor primiero
 Perdesti, o già di luce Angel più bello !
 Eterno avrai dal punitor severo
 All' ingiusto fallir giusto flagello ;
 De' fregi tuoi vagheggiatore altero,
 Dell' altrui seggio usurpator rubello
 Trasformato, e caduto in Flegetonte !
 Orgoglioso Narciso ! empio Fetonte !

* Volle alle forme sue semplici, e prime
 Natura sovralzar corporea, e bassa,
 E de' membri del ciel capo sublime
 Far di limo terrestre eterna massa.

The fine trait in the countenance of the Destroyer, which Milton has borrowed, belongs to Crashaw:

From Death's sad shades to the life-breathing air,
This mortal enemy to mankind's good
Lifts his *malignant eyes, wasted with care,*
To become beautiful in human blood.

Queste dall' ombre morte all' aria viva
Invido pur di nostro stato umano,
Se luce ove per dritto in giù si apriva
Cavernoso spiraglia, alzò lontano.

A few detached lines may be added. Sleep is said to tame

———— The rebellious eye
Of sorrow.

The eyes of Satan which are

—— The *sullen dens* of death and night,
*Startle the dull air with a dismal red**.

The Erinnys which came to Herod, resembles her who was present at "Thebes' dire feast:"

Her sulphur-breathing torches brandishing †.

The sun is seen by the Tempter to

Make proud the *ruby Portals of the East* ‡.

The author of *La Strage degl' Innocenti* was Giambattista Marino, upon whose style Crashaw formed his own, and who is, therefore, entitled to a brief notice in this place. His *Rime Amoroze, Sacre e Varie* came out

* Negli occhi, ove mestizia alberga e morte,
Luce fiammeggia torbida e vermiglia.

† E qual già con facelle empie e funeste
Di Tebe apparve alle sanguigne cene.

‡ *La Reggia Oriental*. So, also, in the Hymn for the Epiphany:

———— Aurora shall set ope
Her ruby casements.

in 1602, and quickly diffused his fame, which subsequent works contributed to increase. His death, in 1625, removed him in the flower of his days. He was buried with the honours of a prince; all the nobles of the land attended his funeral, bearing torches in their hands, and his coffin was covered with crowns of laurel*. Men of genius emulated each other in exalting his memory, and Italy bewailed her Homer, the delight of poesy, and the glory of the Muses. Such are the terms in which his biographer, Loredano, mentions his talents: but a reaction of opinion has now taken place, and he, whose compositions were to be co-existent with the world, has been called by Tiraboschi, the chief corrupter of Italian taste. Marino has experienced a fate by no means uncommon, that of being eulogized and calumniated with equal extravagance and impropriety. His powers have been measured by his lighter *Rime*, while his sacred poetry has been left almost entirely unexplored. But we had nothing before Milton upon a religious theme, to oppose to the *Slaughter of the Innocents*. What might not the author of that sublime production have accomplished, if the nerves of his fancy had not been relaxed by dalliance with a more earthly Muse, and if he had consecrated the morning of his life to Him from whom all poetry descends! In his closing hours he lamented the profanation of his genius, and directed all his amatory verses to be burnt in his presence. But the dragon's teeth were sown, and if they have not sprung up to a deadly harvest, we owe no gratitude to the sower.

* Tutti i Titolati e tutti i principi l' accompagnarono con dopieri accesi nelle mane: la bara era coperto di veluto nero con gli adornamenti cavallereschi e con le corone d' alloro.—*Vita del Marino, da G. F. Loredano.*

The translation of the *Dies Iræ* is spoken of by Pope, as one of the most excellent of Crashaw's compositions. Warton coldly observes, that he has "very well translated the *Dies Iræ**, to which translation Roscommon is much indebted, in his poem on the Day of Judgment." And Dr. Johnson says, speaking of Roscommon, that the best line is taken from Dryden, not remembering that the entire poem shines with a light borrowed from Crashaw. The genius of the noble author was more adapted to write verses "on a Lap-dog," than to paraphrase the Psalms; and yet, in the *Lives of the Poets*, how highly exalted he is above him whom he imitated! With how much generosity are this trifler's benefactions to English literature acknowledged, while a man of a truly poetic mind is passed over in silence. But to style Crashaw's Hymn a translation at all, is an untruth; unless a picture, wrought into life by force of colouring and expression, can be considered a copy of a feeble and inanimate outline. A few verses of the original are subjoined in a note, that the reader may compare them with the supposed version†.

* *Essay on the Genius and Writings of Pope.*

† *Dies Iræ, dies illa,
 Crucis expandens vexilla,
 Solvet Sæclum in favilla!*
*Quantus tremor est futurus,
 Quando Judex est venturus,
 Cuncta strictè discussurus!*
*Tuba mirum spargens sonum,
 Per sepulcra regionum
 Coget omnes ante thronum.*
*Mors stupebit, et natura,
 Cum resurget creatura
 Judicanti responsura.*
*Liber scriptus proferetur,
 In quo totum continetur,
 Unde mundus judicetur.*

THE HYMN.

DIES IRÆ, DIES ILLA.

In Meditation of the Day of Judgment.

HEAR'ST thou, my soul, what serious things
Both the Psalm and Sybil sings,
Of a sure Judge, from whose sharp ray
The world in flames shall pass away?

O that fire ! before whose face
Heav'n and earth shall find no place :
O those eyes, whose angry light
Must be the day of that dread night !

O that trump ! whose blast shall run
An even round with the circling sun,
And urge the murm'ring graves to bring,
Pale mankind forth to meet his King.

Horror of nature, Hell and Death !
When a deep groan from beneath
Shall cry, " We come, we come," and all
The caves of night answer one call.

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O, when Thy last frown shall proclaim
The flocks of goats to folds of flame,
And all Thy lost sheep found shall be,
Let " Come ye blessed " then call me.

When the dread 'Ite' shall divide
Those limbs of death from Thy left side,
Let those life-speaking lips command
That I inherit Thy right hand.

O hear a suppliant heart, all crush'd
And crumbled into contrite dust :
My Hope, my Fear, my Judge, my Friend—
Take charge of me, and of my end.

The last two lines, slightly altered, were pronounced by Roscommon in the moment of death, with great energy and devotion.

The exquisite pathos of the 137th Psalm, has been moulded into numerous forms, some of them very beautiful; and Crashaw's attempt is not the least successful. He touched the harp of sorrow with a brotherly feeling:—

On the proud banks of great Euphrates' flood,
 There we sate, and there we wept:
 Our harps that now no music understood,
 Nodding on the willows, slept,
 While unhappy, captiv'd we,
 Lovely Sion, thought on thee.

They, they that snatcht us from our country's breast
 Would have a song carv'd to their ears,
 In Hebrew numbers, then (O cruel jest!)
 When harps and hearts were drown'd in tears:
 "Come," they cry'd, "come, sing and play
 One of Sion's songs to day."

Sing! Play! To whom (ah) shall we sing or play
 If not, Jerusalem, to thee?
 Ah, thee Jerusalem! Ah, sooner may
 This hand forget the mastery
 Of Musick's dainty touch, than I
 The music of thy memory.

Which when I lose, O may at once my tongue
 Lose this same busy speaking art,
 Unparch'd, her vocal arteries unstrung,
 No more acquainted with my heart,
 On my dry palate's roof to rest,
 A wither'd leaf, an idle guest.

The observations I have ventured to make upon the version from Marino, apply with greater force to *Music's Duell*. "Crashaw's Musical Duel," says Lauder, "the best poem in the collection, is translated from Strada, the Jesuit, without the least distant hint that it was

so*." The want of any acknowledgement to Strada may be explained by the author's absence in a foreign land, and the publication of the poems by a friend. But as this poem must be deemed one of the most remarkable in the language, for its felicity of diction and pictorial effect, it will be worth while to inquire the precise obligations of Crashaw to the Jesuit. Strada's versatility of talent has extorted praise from Tiraboschi, but as a poet he failed, from having no manner of his own. Of his imitations, that of Claudian is the most happy:—

Now westward Sol had spent the richest beams
Of noon's high glory, when hard by the streams
Of Tiber, on the scene of a green plat,
Under protection of an oak, there sat
A sweet lute's master, in whose gentle airs,
He lost the day's heats, and his own hot cares.

Close in the covert of the leaves there stood
A nightingale, come from the neighbouring wood:
The sweet inhabitant of each glad tree,
Their muse, their siren,—harmless siren she!
There stood she listening, and did entertain
The music's soft report, and mould the same
In her own murmurs, that whatever mood
His curious fingers lent, her voice made good—
The man perceives his rival.

Awakes his lute, and 'gainst the fight to come
Informs it in a sweet prelude
Of closer strains, and, ere the war begin,
He lightly skirmishes on every string,
Charged with a flying touch, and straightway she
Carves out her dainty voice as readily—
His nimble hands instinct, then taught each string
A cap'ring cheerfulness, and made them sing

* *Essay on Milton's Use of the Moderns*, 1750, p. 160.

To their own dance ; now negligently rash
He throws his arm, and with a long-drawn dash
Blends all together, then distinctly trips
From this to that, then quick returning skips
And snatches this again, and pauses there ;
She measures every measure, every where
Meets art with art ; sometimes, as if in doubt,
Not perfect yet, and fearing to be out,
Trails her plain ditty in one low-spun note,
Through the sleek passage of her open throat :
A clear unwrinkled song ; then does she point it
With tender accents, and severely joint it
By short diminutives, that being rear'd
In controverting warbles evenly shar'd,
With her sweet self she wrangles. He amazed
That from so small a channel should be raised
The torrent of a voice, whose melody
Could melt into such sweet variety,
Strains higher yet, that tickled with rare art
The tattling strings (each breathing in his part)
Most kindly do fall out ; the grumbling base
In surly groans disdains the treble's grace ;
The high-perched treble chirps at this, and chides,
Until his finger (moderator) hides
And closes the sweet quarrel, rousing all,
Hoarse, shrill at once ; as when the trumpets call
Hot Mars to the harvest of Death's field, and woo
Men's hearts into their hands. This lesson, too,
She gives him back ; her supple breast thrills out
Sharp airs, and staggers in a warbling doubt
Of dallying sweetness, hovers o'er her skill,
And folds, in waved notes, with a trembling bill,
The pliant series of her slippery song ;
Then starts she suddenly into a throng
Of short thick sobs, whose thund'ring volleys float,
And roll themselves over her lubric throat
In panting murmurs —————

She opes the flood-gate, and lets loose a tide
 Of streaming sweetness, *which in state doth ride*
On the wav'd back of every swelling strain,
Rising and falling in a pompous train;
 And while she thus discharges a shrill peal
 Of flashing airs, she qualifies their zeal
 With the cool epode of a graver note,
 Thus high, thus low, *as if her silver throat*
Would reach the brazen voice of war's hoarse bird —

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Shame now and anger mixed a double stain
 In the musician's face —————
 — His hands sprightly as fire he flings,
 And with a *quavering coyness tastes the strings:*
 The sweet-lipped sisters musically frightened,
 Singing their fears, are fearfully delighted;
Trembling as when Apollo's golden hairs
Are fann'd and frizzled in the wanton airs
Of his own breath, which married to his lyre,
 Doth tune the spheres and make heaven's self look higher.
 From this to that, from that to this he flies,
 Feels Music's pulse in all her arteries,
 Caught in a net which there Apollo spreads,
 His fingers struggle with the vocal threads.
 Following these little rills, he sinks into
 A sea of Helicon; his hand does go
 Those parts of sweetness which with nectar drop,
Softer than that which pants in Hebe's cup.
 The humorous strings expound his learned touch
 By various glosses; now they seem to grutch,
 And murmur in a buzzing din, then gingle
 In shrill-tongued accents, striving to be single:
 Every smooth turn, every delicious stroke
 Gives life to some new grace; thus doth he invoke
 Sweetness by all her names; thus, bravely thus
 (Fraught with a fury so harmonious),
The lute's light genius now does proudly rise,
Heav'd on the surges of swoll'n rhapsodies,

Whose flourish (meteor-like) doth curl the air
 With flash of high-born fancies, here and there
 Dancing in lofty measures, and anon
Creeps on the soft touch of a tender tone.

Jam Sol à medio pronus deflexerat orbe
 Mitius, è radiis vibrans crinalibus ignem,
 Cum Fidicen, propter Tiberina fluenta, sonanti
 Lenibat plectra curas, æstumque levabat,
 Ilice defensus nigra scenâque virenti.
 Audiit hunc hospes silvæ Philomela propinquæ
 Musa loci, nemoris siren,—innoxia siren ;
 Et prope succedens stetit abdita frondibus, alte
 Accipiens sonitum, secumque remurmurat, et quos
 Ille modos variat digitis, hæc gutture reddit.
 Sensit se Fidicen Philomela imitante referri,
 Et placuit ludum volucris dare ; plenius ergo
 Explorat citharam, tentamentumque futuræ
 Præbeat ut pugnæ, percussit protinus omnes
 Impulsu pernice fides—nec segnius illa.
 Mille per excurrens variæ discrimina vocis,
 Venturi specimen præfert argutula cantus.
 Tunc Fidicen per fila movens trepidantia dextram,
 Nunc contemnenti similis diverberat ungue,
 Depectitque pari chordas, et simplice ductu :
 Nunc carptim replicat, digitisque micantibus urget
 Fila minutatim, celerique repercutit ictu.
 Mox silet. Illa modis totidem respondet, et artem
 Arte refert. Nunc seu rudis, aut incerta canendi
 Projicit in longum, nulloque plicatile flexu
 Carmen init, simili serie, jugique tenore,
 Præbet iter liquidum labenti e pectore voce ;
 Nunc cæsim variat, modulisque canora minutis.
 Delibrat vocem, tremuloque reciprocatur ore.
 Miratur Fidicen parvis è faucibus ire
 Tam varium, tam dulce melos ; majoraque tentans
 Alternat mira arte fides ; dum torquet acutas
 Inciditque, graves operoso verbere pulsas,
 Permiscetque simul certantia rauca sonoris,

Ceu resides in bella viros clangore lacesat.
 Hoc etiam Philomela canit: dumque ore liquenti
 Vibrat acuta sonum, modulisque interplicat æquis;
 Ex inopinato gravis intonat, et leve murmur
 Turbinat introrsus, alternantique sonore
 Clarat, et infuscat ceu martia classica pulset.
 Scilicet erubuit Fidicen, —————
 Non imitabilibus plectrum concentibus urget.
 Namque manu per fila volat, simul hos, simul illos
 Explorat numeros, chordaque laborat in omni,
 Et strepit, et tinnit, crescitque superbius, et se
 Multiplicat religens, plenoque choreumate plaudit.

This extract will be sufficient. It is idle to seek in the Latin text for the vigour, the fancy, and the grandeur of these lines. These remain with Crashaw, of whose obligations to Strada we may say, as Hayley remarked of Pope's debt to Crashaw, that if he borrowed any thing from him in this article, it was only as the sun borrows from the earth, when drawing from thence a mere vapour, he makes it the delight of every eye, by giving it all the tender and gorgeous colouring of heaven.

Crashaw is one of a class of poets who have obtained the appellation of the metaphysical school, though for what reason it is difficult to determine. It was, I believe, first bestowed on them by Dryden, who desired to characterize by the epithet a style directly opposed to the freedom of his own. Petrarch and Marino were the founders of this sect, which in the reigns of James and Charles the First, boasted some of the most illustrious names. The poetry of Crashaw offers an admirable exemplification of this corrupt system. Writing in his native tongue, his manner is evidently foreign. He is not descriptive, but picturesque; we look in

vain for images of rural simplicity, and touches of domestic feeling. He contemplates nature, as it were, through a painted window, from which every object takes its particular hue. Thus the rose he describes is not the rose of our gardens, or our hedges; his flowers have never cheered our eyes in the field-paths; they are natives of a land visited only by the poet's imagination. He fails in arousing our sympathy, because he addresses our memory instead of our heart. We have also to object to these writers the want of symmetry in their compositions; their richest colouring often darkens into a daub; their choicest music closes in discord. When reading them we think of the Centaur of Zeuxis, which began in loveliness and ended in deformity.

The faults of Crashaw are those of his school; and it has been truly said*, that the strength of his thoughts sometimes appears in their distortion. When released from his self-imposed fetters, he uttered his lays with a softness, that like the melody of the nightingale he sang, seems to come from a silver throat. How full of pastoral sweetness is the "Hymn of the Nativity, sung as by the shepherds!"

GLOOMY night embraced the place

Where the noble Infant lay;

The Babe look'd up and show'd his face—

In spite of darkness it was day.

We saw thee in thy balmy nest,

Bright dawn of our eternal day!

We saw thine eyes break from their east,

And chase the trembling shades away:

We saw thee, and we blest the sight,

We saw thee by thy own sweet light.

* By Mr. Campbell.

She sings thy tears asleep, and dips
 Her kisses in thy weeping eye ;
 She spreads the red leaves of thy lips,
 That in their buds yet blushing lie.

Yet when young April's husband-showers
 Shall bless the fruitful Maia's bed,
 We'll bring the first-born of her flowers
 To kiss thy feet and crown thy head.
 To thee dread Lamb ! whose love must keep
 The shepherds more than they their sheep.

To Thee, meek Majesty ! soft King
 Of simple graces and sweet loves ;
 Each of us his lamb will bring,
 Each his pair of silver doves*.

And what a bright vein of imagination runs through
 his Hymn to the Morning :—

. O Thou
 Bright Lady of the morn ! pity doth lie
 So warm in thy soft breast, it cannot die—
 Have mercy then, and when he next shall rise
 O meet the angry God, invade his eyes.
 ——— So my wakeful lay shall knock
 At th' oriental gates, and duly mock
 The early lark's shrill orisons, to be
 An anthem at the day's nativity.
 And the same rosy-fingered hand of thine,
 That shuts night's dying eyes, shall open mine ;
 But thou faint God of sleep, forget that I
 Was ever known to be thy votary.
 No more my pillow shall thine altar be,
 Nor will I offer any more to thee,
 Myself a melting sacrifice : I'm born
 Again a fresh child of the buxom morn,
 Heir of the Sun's first beams, why threat'st thou so ?
 Why dost thou shake thy leaden sceptre ? Go

* Several lines are omitted.

Bestow thy poppy upon wakeful woe,
 Sickness and sorrow, whose pal'e lids ne'er know
 Thy downy finger ; dwell upon their eyes,
 Shut in their tears, shut out their miseries !

I have already extracted largely from Crashaw's poetry, or it would be easy to multiply instances of new and pleasing similes, and metaphors most ingeniously constructed. He was not always the stringer of pretty beads. His character of true poetic genius contrasted with his own, is very noble :—

———— No rapture makes it live
 Drest in the glorious madness of a muse,
 Whose feet can walk the milky way,
 Her starry throne, and hold up an exalted arm
 To lift me from my lazy urn, and climb
 Upon the stooped shoulders of old time,
 And trace eternity.

Between his Latin and English poems there is very little difference. In the versification he appears to have imitated the epigrammatic turns of Martial :—

IN S. COLUMBAM AD CHRISTI CAPUT SEDENTEM.
 Cui sacra siderea volucris suspenditur alâ ?
 Hunc nive plus niveum cui dabit illa pedem ?
 Christe, tuo capiti totis se destinat auris,
 Qua ludit densæ blandior umbra comæ—
 Illic arcano quid non tibi murmure narrat ?
 (Murmure mortales non imitante sonos—)
 Sola avis hæc nido hoc non est indigna cubare ;
 Solus nidus hic est hac bene dignus ave.

TO THE SACRED DOVE ALIGHTING ON THE HEAD OF CHRIST*.

On whom doth this blest bird its wings outspread ?
 Where will it suffer its white feet to rest ?
 O Jesus, hovering o'er thy hallowed head,
 Within thy hair's sweet shade, it seeks a nest.

* In these translations I have endeavoured to be as literal as possible.

There does it breathe a mystic song to Thee,
 A melody unlike all earthly sound ;
 That bird alone to this pure nest may flee,
 This nest alone worthy the bird is found.

IN CÆTUM OMNIUM SANCTORUM.

Felices animæ ! quas cælo debita virtus
 Jam potuit vestris inseruisse polis.
 Hoc dedit egregii non parcus sanguinis usus,
 Spesque per obstantes expatiata vias.
 O ver ! O longæ semper seges aurea lucis,
 Nocte nec alternâ, dimidiata dies—
 O quæ palma manu ridet ! quæ fronte corona !
 O nix virgineæ non temeranda togæ !
 Pacis inocciduae vos illic ora videtis :
 Vos Agni dulcis lumina : vos—quid ago ?

TO THE ASSEMBLY OF ALL THE SAINTS.

Thrice happy souls, to whom the prize is given,
 Whom faith and truth have lifted into heaven,—
 Gift of the heavenly Martyr's dying breath,
 Gift of a Faith that burst the Gates of Death !
 O Spring ! O golden harvest of glad light,
 Sweet day, whose beauty never fades in night !
 The palm blooms in each hand, the garland on each brow,
 The raiment glitters in its undimm'd snow !
 The regions of unfading Peace ye see,
 And the meek brightness of the Lamb—how different
 from me !

The name of Cowley is associated with the history of Crashaw ; he spoke of himself as one whom Crashaw was "so humble to esteem, so good to love." And Crashaw, when he sent "two green apricots" to his friend, poured out the sincere praise of his attachment. He was considered an imitator of Cowley, but they resembled each other only in their love of conceits. Of Cowley's boyish rhymes, a modern critic cannot be

required to say any thing; for even the author professed himself unwilling to be obliged to read them all over. Yet his Poetical Blossoms were the offspring of a tree that might have produced golden fruit, if he had not liked better to carve its branches into quaint devices, than suffer them to spread into verdant strength. His was, indeed, a case of mental perversion; the ruggedness of his lines, and the eccentricity of his imagery, are affirmed by his flattering biographer, Dr. Sprat, to have been "his choice, not his fault." The writer of the raciest and clearest prose sank into a mysterious expounder of the idlest trifles.

His sacred poetry has been criticised by Johnson. The *Davideis*, his most ambitious attempt, was composed while he was a student at Cambridge. No one ever dreams that it was inspired by the *Faery Queen*, which used to lie in the window-seat of his father's house, or that Milton deemed the poet worthy of being admitted into the triumvirate, of which Spenser and Shakspeare were members. Fuller said of an ornamental writer, that the extravagance of his fancy had introduced a new alphabet; and Cowley sought to effect a similar change in the language of poetry. He had wandered in the labyrinth until he preferred it to the open country. Difficulty was become essential to his amusement. But we lose sight of the faults of the bard, in the truth and generosity of the Christian; and Chertsey, where

The last accents flowed from Cowley's tongue,
will continue to draw many footsteps to its honoured neighbourhood.

MORE, NORRIS, BEAUMONT, FLATMAN.

OF the fellow-collegian and friend of Milton, a notice will not be uninteresting.

HENRY MORE was born at Grantham, in Lincolnshire, on the 12th of October, 1614. His parents, who were rigid Calvinists, placed him under the care of a private tutor of their own persuasion, with whom he remained till his fourteenth year, when, by the advice of his uncle, he was removed to Eton, with strict injunctions to preserve his religious tenets. But More soon began to manifest an antipathy to the doctrines of Calvin. These symptoms of dissatisfaction did not escape the observation of his uncle, who expressed his displeasure in very angry terms. More was not an ordinary boy, and the threats of his relation only stimulated him to a deeper investigation of the belief in which he had been educated. Often, he tells us, while he took his solitary walk in the play-ground of the school, with his head on one side, and kicking the stones with his feet, as he was wont to do, the subject of religion occupied his thoughts; for even in my first childhood, he continues, an inward sense of the Divine Presence was so strong upon my mind, that I did then believe that there could no deed, word, or thought, be hidden from Him. From Eton, where he stayed three years, he was sent to Christ's College, Cambridge, and to his great delight was admitted under a tutor who was not a Calvinist. Here he immersed himself head over ears* in the study of philosophy, and devoted nearly four years to the

* His own phrase.

perusal of Aristotle, Cardan, Scaliger, &c., but he reaped no harvest for his toil.

After he had taken his Bachelor's degree, he entered on a new course of study, replacing his former favourites with the platonic writers. He was also captivated by the *Theologia Germanica* of John Tauler, which he styled a golden little book. The writings of this individual were admired by Luther and Melancthon; and some of his sermons were approved by Bossuet, who considered him one of the most solid and correct of the mystics. More laboured with indefatigable perseverance, and the effects of his researches were quickly visible in a mind exalted to the highest pitch of enthusiasm, and a frame attenuated to skin and bone. He indulged in a belief that his soul had communicated some of its newly-acquired ethereality to his body, which, he assured his friends, at particular seasons exhaled the perfume of violets. His theory of the divine body is developed in his Dialogues. "The oracle of God," he said, "is not to be heard but in his Holy Temple, that is to say, in a good and holy man, thoroughly sanctified."

In 1640, he began to form his mystical speculations into the *Psycho Zoia*, a picture of platonic life in the soul, to the composition of which he thought himself impelled by some heavenly impulse. He was now in his twenty-sixth year, and appears to have been regarded as a melancholy student, for some opposition was at first offered to his election to a fellowship, on the score of his sad and uncheerful disposition. He was, however, by nature inclined to excessive mirth, which he accounted one of his greatest infirmities.

In the civil war, More was allowed to retain his fellowship; and the severe inquisitors who ejected

Crashaw and Cowley, left the philosopher to dream with Plato in his academic bower*. But he was not without anxiety for the fate of his country; and once, on being informed of a great defeat sustained by the royal army, in the words of his biographer, his spirit sat itself down, and with tears bewailed the evils of his native land.

He occasionally passed a few days at Ragley, in Warwickshire, the residence of his enthusiastic friend, Lady Conway, where he wrote several of his treatises. In 1675 he was presented, by the brother of this lady, to a Prebend in the Church of Gloucester; but he quickly resigned it in favour of Dr. Fowler, for whose sake alone he is supposed to have accepted it. Preferment, indeed, was almost thrust upon him. Ward says, he had seen letters courting him to occupy some of the highest ecclesiastical offices in Ireland. The Deanery of Christ Church, and the Provostship of Trinity College, were among the number. He was, however, inexorable in declining them. One nobleman, after tempting him in vain with two Bishoprics, prayed him not to be so morose or humoursome as to refuse all things he had not known so long as Christ's College. And when an English Bishopric had been procured for him, and his friends had succeeded in bringing him to Whitehall to kiss the King's hand, on discovering their real object, he resolutely insisted on returning to Cambridge immediately. These anecdotes show the simple and contented nature of the man.

The evening of his life was as peaceful as the dawn. Having his mind enlightened with the noblest views in the morning of his years, he went on shining more

* Campbell.

and more unto the perfect day. In his last sickness, he declared, with the tears in his eyes, that he had given his writings to the world with great sincerity, and that all his days had been spent in seeking after the good and the true. The day before his death, he replied to the question of one who watched by his bed-side, in that affecting passage of Cicero, beginning *O præclarum illum diem*. He said, that he was going to be united to that company with whom he should be as well acquainted in a quarter of an hour, as if he had known them for years. This idea he has enlarged in a letter to a friend, who had requested from him some topics of consolation, to administer to a young lady in ill health*.

It may be desirable to caution the reader that More did not employ the phrase of a pagan writer, in this closing scene of his existence, to the exclusion of the more delightful consolations of the Bible; he only borrowed the words to apply them to the expression of Christian faith and reliance in the atonement of a Redeemer. Thus he gave them a new spirit and a new signification.

He died on the 1st of September, 1687, in the seventy-third year of his age, and was buried in the chapel of the College, where the ashes of Mede and Cudworth

* The friendship and society of amiable persons for feature and converse, the beauty of persons in the other world infinitely excelling that in this, as much as the purest star does the dirtiest clod of earth: and those whose persons and aspects are so lovely, it is the genuine eradication of the life of their very souls or spirits, and they are as assured of the cordial kindness they have one for another, and this at the very first entrance, as if they had been acquainted many years together. Nor is the affection of any father or mother to their only child, more dear and sincere than that of the holy inhabitants of the other world, towards good and innocent souls, that pass out of this earthly body into the condition of those heavenly spirits, those Angelical Ministers of the Divine Providence, who are ready about the godly, when they die, to conduct their souls to the happy place provided for them.—*Letters on several Subjects*, ed. by Elys, 1694, p. 21.

rest by his side. In person he was tall and thin, and in early life, of an agreeable florid countenance, though the intensity of his application in after-times imparted a more pallid hue to his features; but his complexion was always clear and healthful, and his eye hazel and vivid as an eagle*. The nature of his occupations did not encourage the cultivation of the lighter accomplishments; but he had some skill in music, and played a little on the lute, till the painful ecstasy of the pleasure compelled him to relinquish it. His conversation was serious and pleasant, and Bishop Burnet, who visited him at Cambridge, spoke of him as an open-hearted Christian philosopher, who studied to establish men in the great principle of religion against Atheism.

It is, however, to be lamented that this excellent man submitted his religious feelings to the direction of his imagination, or suffered them to assume even the faintest hue of a romantic or poetical character. He built, indeed, upon the Rock of Ages, yet he unintentionally defaced the majestic simplicity of Sacred Truth by the unlicensed indulgence of his fancy. He never for a moment suspected that he might be injuring by his conduct the cause he laboured so zealously to promote. But the purity and tranquillity which he enjoyed are given to few. A spectator of the world only through his "loop-holes of retreat;" unseduced by its allurements, uncorrupted by its pleasures—he did not always consider that every heart was not like his own. The orthodoxy of his belief can alone be vindicated by a careful perusal of his writings. In them it will be seen how firmly he grasped the promises of the Gospel, and with what a sleepless eye of faith he waited for their

* Ward.

accomplishment. From the declaration of the Scripture, as from a lofty tower, he looked afar into a happier and more peaceful future. "This, or such-like rhapsodies," he says in his *Dialogues*, "do I often sing to myself in the silent night, or betimes in the morning at break of day; subjoining always that of our Saviour as a suitable *Epiphonema* to all,—*Abraham saw my day afar off, and rejoiced at it*. At this window I take breath, while I am choked and stifled with the crowd and stench of the daily wickedness of this present evil world; and am almost quite wearied out with the tediousness and irksomeness of this my earthly pilgrimage."

The mysticism of More's works was only the reflection of his life. He saw visions, and dreamed dreams. At one time, for ten days, he was, in his own phrase, *no where*, continuing all the time in a trance; yet during this period he ate, drank, slept, and went into Hall as usual, but the thread of his ruminations was never broken. While in this state, he affirmed that his thoughts possessed a singular clearness; his devotional feelings were not less ardent or powerful in their influence. Mr. Ward, when he occasionally met him coming from his chamber after prayer, discerned an illumination over his countenance, "as if his face had been wholly overcast with a golden shower of love and purity." Let us recollect that this was said of one whom some of the most eminent of his contemporaries pronounced the holiest person on the face of the earth. Though he was fond of solitude, and regretted that he had sacrificed so many hours to conversation, there was nothing selfish in his character; his love embraced every object. "A good man," he said, "would sometimes, in his own private reflections, be ready to kiss the very

stones in the street." He was fond of meditating in the cool summer-evenings, when the air fanned "itself through the leaves of the arbour*," and many incidental remarks in his prose works show him to have been a disciple of nature."

He was charitable and benevolent to all. His chamber-door, we are told by one who knew him familiarly, was an hospital. In one of his Discourses on several Texts, he touches upon the sentiments with which a good man regards the unhappiness he is unable to remove.

"And even the most miserable objects in this present scene of things cannot divest him of his happiness, but rather modify it; the sweetness of his spirit being melted into a kindly compassion in the behalf of others, whom, if he be able to help, it is a greater accession to his joy; and if he cannot, the being conscious to himself of so sincere a compassion, and so harmonious and suitable to the present state of things, carries along with it some degree of pleasure, like mournful notes of music exquisitely well fitted to the sadness of the ditty." The sequestered paths of his own life were not much frequented by these melancholy sufferers, but a disregard of money marked all his actions, and one of the wishes nearest to his heart was, the bequest of a valuable legacy to his beloved College.

His philosophical works were all composed with the noblest intentions. The *Leviathan* of Hobbes, by its startling paradoxes and its bold assumption of truth, had gained many votaries, and it was in the hope of counteracting its pernicious tendency, that "a set

* See his *Dialogues*.

of men at Cambridge" undertook to examine and publicly assert the principles of religion and morality, on simple grounds, and upon a philosophical plan. The most distinguished of these illustrious champions were Cudworth, whom to name is to praise; the scientific Wilkins, whom Burnet declared the wisest clergyman he ever knew; and our poet, who led the way, the Bishop says, to many that came after him*.

More has been dethroned from his literary supremacy, and from the most popular of authors, has become one of the most obscure. Yet, for many years after the Restoration, his works were held in extraordinary esteem. His philosophic writings are full of ingenuity and learning. He believed that the sacred knowledge of the Hebrews descended to Pythagoras, by whom it had been communicated to Plato, and this delusion affected every thing he wrote and did. He imagined himself to be attended by a genius, like the Dæmon of Socrates, and would sometimes remark, in reference to this unearthly agent, that "there was something about us that knew better than ourselves what we would be at." It is impossible to suppress a smile at the philosopher who gravely assures us, that "Otho was pulled out of his bed by the ghost of Galba." His chapter on the employments of the "Aërial People," in the *Treatise on the Immortality of the Soul*, is equally singular. But, when his fancy was not heated, he argued with great acuteness and precision, and no man ran the spear through his own shadows with greater dexterity. He frequently pleases, though he rarely convinces; and it should always be remembered, that his antagonist, Hobbes, declared his admiration of his philosophy, and that

* Burnet's History of his own Time. Oxford edition, 1823, vol. i., p. 322.

Addison commended his system of Ethics in the *Spectator*. The vanity of Hobbes, and the taste of Addison, speak powerfully in his cause.

As a scholar, he was widely and deeply read, but learning he valued only as subservient to the higher and weightier matters of wisdom and truth. He constantly asserted that piety was the only key of true knowledge, which could proceed alone out of purity of life. He rejoiced that he was *no wholesale man*, for he said that a little armour was sufficient, if well placed.

His prose is superior to his verse. No successful appeal can be made from Dr. Southey's severe judgment upon the *Song of the Soul*. His ears were first tuned to poetry by the music of the *Faery Queen*, which his father often read aloud on the winter evenings: the harp of Spenser was never touched by a ruder hand. But to the few who are willing to accept the grandeur of the conception for the poverty of the execution, the poems of More will not be destitute of interest. He did not wander along the Great Sea of Beauty without beholding the forms that rose from its waters; and from the intricacies of his harsh and gnarled phraseology, thoughts of grace and tenderness often come out to meet us. Mr. Campbell has compared his poetry to some strange grotto, whose gloomy labyrinths we might be curious to explore for the strange associations they excite.

More was happy in the fellowship of some excellent men, who partook of his innocence, simplicity, and enthusiasm. Of these, by far the most remarkable was, John Norris, whose few poems display no ordinary genius, and whose sermons on the *Beatitudes*, overflow with sensibility. His life was in harmony with his pro-

fession; he built his tabernacle away from the tumult of the world, and set up his pillar of rest in a holy place*. His writings are imbued with the serene thoughtfulness of an amiable mind. His charming *Idea of Happiness* was the meditation of a few broken hours in a garden. Although not unvisited by those raptures, on account of which he gave More the name of the Intellectual Epicure, his fancy was more sober and temperate. His glimpses of a brighter country were not less vivid than those of his friend; but he descended from his heavenly contemplations with a more solemn awe, and a more reverential silence.

JOSEPH BEAUMONT, a contemporary and opponent of More, was born at Hadleigh, in Suffolk, March 13th, 1615, and having received the rudiments of his education in the Grammar School of that town, he was, in his sixteenth year, sent to Cambridge, and entered of Peterhouse. The love of study, which had marked his boyhood, accompanied him to the University, and together with the propriety of his demeanour, attracted the notice of Dr. Cosins, the master of Peterhouse. After obtaining his Bachelor's Degree, he was elected Fellow and Tutor of his College. The rebellion, however, drove him from Cambridge, and he retired to his native place, where he forgot his persecutions in the composition of his elaborate poem *Psyche*, which he completed with astonishing rapidity. Of this work, Pope has observed that it contains a great many flowers well worth the gathering, and that a man who has the art of stealing wisely, will find his account in reading it.

Beaumont possessed in Bishop Wren, a sincere friend

* His own words.

and a liberal patron: when deprived of all his preferments by the Parliament, that Prelate welcomed him to his house, appointed him domestic chaplain, and in 1650, gave him his step-daughter in marriage: with this lady, Beaumont lived in retirement until the Restoration drew him from his seclusion. He was created Doctor of Divinity in 1660, by the King's Letters, and from this time his life was prosperous and tranquil. He succeeded Dr. Pearson in the Mastership of Jesus College, in 1662, which he shortly afterwards exchanged for that of Peterhouse. In 1670, he was chosen Regius Professor of Divinity, a situation he retained till his death in 1699. He was buried in the College Chapel, where his son Charles also lies.

Beaumont has been highly commended for the excellence of his Latin style. He was, also, an artist. The pictures by the altar of Peterhouse Chapel were drawn by him in chalk and charcoal; and Carter, the Cambridge historian, thought the Wise Men's Offering, on the north side, particularly fine.

Dr. Southey has condemned *Psyche* to oblivion, as unreadably dull; and few students will be found armed with sufficient patience to penetrate through the dreariness of its twenty cantos. But the barren heath is intersected by many green and flowery paths, and nourished by little streams of genuine poetry. The misfortune is, that we grow weary before we find them. The poem represents the intercourse between Christ and the human spirit; and Beaumont endeavoured to portray a soul conducted by Divine Grace and her guardian angel, through all the temptations and assaults of its earthly enemies, into the permanent happiness of heaven. If he had restricted himself to an undeviating

observance of this outline, many of the defects of the work would have been avoided; but he added fable to fable, and piled truth upon fiction, with so rash and tasteless a hand, as to impair not only the aspect, but the foundation of the structure. It may not be just to censure him for the familiarity of his expressions, and the ludicrous contrasts which every page presents. The theological literature of the age is open to a like reproof. In one of Dr. Hammond's Sermons, the angels are called "glittering courtiers of the superior world*:" and the reader of Jeremy Taylor will not require to be reminded how often that master of eloquence degrades the dignity of a comparison by a common allusion or inappropriate expletive, or how frequently he raises statues of pure gold on pedestals of clay. In his sublimest productions these spots are visible, detracting from the solemnity of the theme, in the same manner as a humorous extravagance of Hogarth sketched in the corner of a picture by Raphael. While Taylor only stooped at long intervals to the prevailing corruptions of style, Beaumont seldom elevated himself above them. But when he rose into a clearer element, his imagination was proportionably spiritualized. When he unfolds the "ruby gates" of the Orient, and discloses to our eyes the spirit of the Morning "mounting his "chariot of gold," whose "diamond wheels" burn along the paths of Heaven, we regret that his taste was not always the handmaid of his fancy.

Beaumont has not been admitted into any collection of specimens of our poets; but the advice of Pope has drawn a few industrious eyes to his pages; and if *Psyche* should at a future period be reprinted, it will be

* Sermons, 1649, p. 51.

the duty of the Editor to show that the "art of stealing wisely" is not lost among us.

Wood has honoured FLATMAN with the title of an eminent poet. He painted better than he wrote, and Granger esteemed one of his heads worth a ream of his Pindarics. These justify the satire of Lord Rochester; but Pope copied him in *The Dying Christian to his Soul*, without thinking it necessary to mention the obligation. The *Thought of Death* must yield to the natural and impressive earnestness of the following verses:—

Oh, the sad day,
When friends shall shake their heads, and say
Oh miserable me.
Hark how he groans! look how he pants for breath!
See how he struggles with the pangs of Death!
When they shall say of these poor eyes,
How hollow and how dim they be!
Mark how his breast doth swell and rise
Against his potent enemy!
When some old friend shall step to my bed-side,
Touch my chill face, and thence shall gently slide;
And when his next companions say
"How doth he do? What hopes?" shall turn away;
Answering only with a lift-up hand—
"Who can his fate withstand?"
Then shall a gasp or two do more
Than e'er my rhetoric could before;
Persuade the peevish world to trouble me no more*.

* The only place in which I have seen this poem quoted, is in a note in Elton's reprint of Habington.

SUPPLEMENT.

SUPPLEMENT.

PAGE 6.—Archbishop Sharp, whom Burnet pronounced one of the most popular preachers of the age, was a great reader of Shakspeare. Dr. Mangey, who married his daughter, told the Speaker Onslow, that he advised all young Divines to unite the reading of Shakspeare to the study of the Scriptures; and Dr. Lisle, Bishop of Norwich, who had been Chaplain to Archbishop Wake, assured Onslow that Sharp's declaration, "that the Bible and Shakspeare had made him Archbishop of York," was often repeated at Lambeth Palace.—See Onslow's note to the Oxford edition of *Burnet's History of his own Time*, vol. iii., p. 100.

Sharp was celebrated for the vigour and effect with which his Sermons were delivered.

FLETCHER.

Page 29.—Dr. Fletcher formed one of the Commission of the Metropolitan Visitation, appointed in 1581.—Strype's *Life of Bishop Grindal*, p. 396, Oxford edition. In May 1596, Bishop Fletcher wrote to Lord Burleigh, requesting that nobleman to procure for his brother the appointment of Master Extraordinary in Chancery.—Strype's *Annals of the Reformation*, vol. iv., p. 373. Dr. Fletcher was also Remembrancer of the City of London, an office obtained for him by Queen Elizabeth, who addressed a long letter in her own hand to the Lord Mayor, &c., upon the subject. A copy of this singular epistle I have been permitted to peruse, and

the terms in which Dr. Fletcher is recommended, evince the respect he was held in by Elizabeth.

Page 55.—This would have been more correctly expressed by saying, that three new books of the *Faerie Queen* were published in 1596.

WITHER.

Page 89.—Wither was again in prison in 1621. Mr. Collier has communicated to me the following interesting extracts from the Registers of the Privy Council:—

26 June, 1621.

A Warrant to John Perrial, to bring before the Lords the person of George Wither.

27 June, 1621.

This day George Wither, Gent., having been sent for by warrant from the Lords, hath tendred his appearance, which for his indemnity is here entred, he being nevertheless enjoined to remaine in the custody of the Messenger, until by order from the Lords he shalbe dismissed. ‡

On the same day, however, we find from another entry, that the Council issued a warrant to commit George Wither close prisoner into the Marshalsea, until further order.

15 March, 1621.

A warrant to the Keeper of the Marshalsea, to enlarge and sett at liberty the person of George Wythers, upon Bond, to be given by him, with a Suretie before the Clerke of the Councell attendant, to his Majesty's use for his forthcomeing and appearance at all tyme, as there shalbe cause.

Page 115.—One stanza from the "Prayer of Habakkuk," has been frequently quoted; a free animated manner pervades the entire poem:—

THE PRAYER OF HABAKKUK.

GOD Almighty he came, down;

Down he came from Theman-ward;

And the matchless Holy One
 From Mount Paran forth appeared,
 Heaven o'erspreading with his rays,
 And earth filling with his praise.

Sun-like was his glorious light;
 From his side there did appear
 Beaming rays that shined bright;
 And his power he shrouded there.
 Plagues before his face he sent;
 At his feet hot coals there went.

Where He stood, He measure took
 Of the earth, and viewed it well;
 Nations vanish'd at his look;
 Ancient hills to powder fell—

* * * *

Through the earth Thou rifts didst make,
 And the rivers there did flow:
 Mountains seeing Thee did shake,
 And away the floods did go—
 From the deep a voice was heard,
 And his hands on high he rear'd.

SANDYS.

Page 128.—An erroneous calculation of the extent of the MS. alone prevented the insertion of a more copious notice of this interesting poet, in the earlier portion of the volume.

GEORGE SANDYS, a younger son of the Archbishop, was born at the palace of Bishop Thorp, in 1587, and in his eleventh year was matriculated at St. Mary's Hall; but Wood conjectures that he afterwards emigrated to Corpus Christi College. It does not appear that he took any degree. In August, 1610, he set out on his travels, during which he visited the most interesting

cities of Europe, and extended his researches into Egypt and the Holy Land. After an absence of several years he returned to England, and prepared the history of his wanderings, which issued from the press in 1615. He seems also to have been one of the early residents in Virginia; for Drayton, in an Elegy addressed to Sandys, speaks of him as Treasurer to the English Company in that country. After his return, he spent much of his time with his sister, Lady Wenman, at Caswell, near Witney, in Oxfordshire. This situation was rendered still more agreeable to him from its proximity to the retreat of his accomplished and amiable friend, Lord Falkland, whom to know was to esteem. In this delightful seclusion he meditated on the dangers he had escaped, and acknowledged the care of that Heavenly Shepherd by whom he had been conducted in all his journeyings. He has expressed his feelings in that admirable poem, *Deo. Opt. Max.*:—

O! who hath tasted of Thy clemency
In greater measure, or more oft than I?
My grateful verse thy goodness shall display,
O Thou, who went'st along in all my way—
To where the morning, with perfumed wings,
From the high mountains of Panchæa springs
To that new-found-out-world, where sober night
Takes from the Antipodes her silent flight;
To those dark seas where horrid winter reigns,
And binds the stubborn floods in icy chains;
To Lybian wastes, whose thirst no showers assuage,
And where swoll'n Nilus cools the lion's rage.
Thy wonders on the deep have I beheld,
Yet all by those on Judah's hills excell'd;
There where the Virgin's Son his doctrine taught,
His miracles and our redemption wrought,

Where I, by Thee inspired, his praises sung,
 And on his sepulchre my offering hung ;
 Which way soe'er I turn my face or feet,
 I see Thy glory and Thy mercy meet ;
 Met on the Thracian shores, when in the strife
 Of frantic Simoans thou preserv'dst my life—
 So when Arabian thieves belaid us round,
 And when by all abandon'd, Thee I found.

*

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Then brought'st me home in safety, that this earth
 Might bury me, which fed me from my birth.

Having finished the sacred work for which he believed himself designed, and paid his vows at the altar of his God, Sandys was gathered to his fathers in the beginning of March, 1643. He died at Boxley Abbey, the seat of his niece, Lady Margaret Wyatt, and was buried in the chancel of the Parish Church, without any monument. In the Register he is styled the most illustrious poet of his age; a title the amiable minstrel would have been the first to reject. But Pope is known to have studied his writings with great pleasure; and Dryden affirmed him to be the best versifier of the day. At his death he was one of the Gentlemen of the Privy Chamber to Charles the First, who highly valued his productions.

The Paraphrase of the Psalms has been already referred to. These verses are taken from the 102nd and 131st Psalms:—

Like desert-haunting pelicans,
 In cities not less desolate :
 Like screech-owls who, with ominous strains,
 Disturb the night, and daylight hate ;
 A sparrow which hath lost his mate,
 And on a pinnacle complains.

My days short as the evening shade,
 As morning dew consume away ;
 As grass cut down with scythes I fade,
 Or like a flower cropt yesterday.
 But, Lord, thou suffer'st no decay,
 Thy promises shall never vade*.

Thou, Lord, my witness art
 I am not proud of heart,
 Nor look with lofty eyes,
 None envy, nor despise.
 Nor to vain pomp apply
 My thoughts, nor soar too high :
 But in behaviour mild,
 And as a tender child,
 Weaned from his mother's breast,
 On Thee alone I rest.
 O Israel, adore
 The Lord for ever more.
 Be He the only scope
 Of thy unfainting hope.

Sandys's sister married Anthony Aucher, and was grandmother to the poet Thomas Stanley; and from the same Lady, James Hammond was descended†.

BRAITHWAIT.

Page 128.—Mr. Collier has pointed out to me another allusion to Wither, by Braithwait, in *Time's Curtaine Drawne*, 1621, where, after glancing at *Abuses Whipt and Stript*, he says in the margin, with evident reference to Wither—"One whom I admire, being no less happy for his native invention, than excellent for his proper and elegant dimension." The latter part of the passage seems to imply a compliment to the personal appear-

* Depart—pass away.

† Brydges's note in the reprint of Drayton's *Select Poems*.

ance of our poet. Braithwait was his contemporary at Oxford, having been entered a Commoner of Oriel College, in 1604. Like his friend, too, he was more remarkable for his addiction to poetry and general literature, than to the prescribed studies of the University. His after-life was principally passed in the country, and he is said by Wood, to have left behind him the character of a well-bred gentleman and a good neighbour.

PEACHAM.

Page 132.—Henry Peacham, whom Warton calls an elegant and learned writer, was born about 1576, and became a student of Trinity College, Cambridge, where he shared in the paternal generosity of Nevil, whom he panegyricized in the *Gentleman's Exercise*. He appears to have been patronised by the amiable Princess Elizabeth, on whose marriage he wrote his "Nuptial Hymns," which have been reprinted by Waldron in the *Literary Museum*. His life was one of sorrow and dependence—at one time, a travelling tutor, at another, the master of a Free School at Windham, in Norfolk, an employment to which he was exceedingly averse. Malone thinks that he took orders, and died in 1650. Sir John Hawkins says, that he subsisted in his old age by writing penny books for children. His Emblems were published in 1612, and a second volume was prepared, but did not pass the press. Besides being a good scholar, he was a clever artist, and amused himself in painting his friends, or imitating each "strange field flower," or "rare seen fly." In the months of June and July, (he says, *Drawing and Limning*, Lib. 1, p. 57,) I was wont at my leisure to walk into the fields, and get all manner of flies, flowers, herbs, &c., which I

either put presently into colours, or kept preserved all the year, to imitate at my leisure, in close boxes." Peacham merited a better fortune.

WITHER.

Page 169.—Burton has the following entry in his *Diary*, December 22, 1656:—

"Colonel Whetham offered a petition in behalf of Colonel Wither.

"Mr. Speaker said he had also a copy of very good verses, from the same hand, to offer."

Mr. Rutt supposes this copy of verses to have been the *Boni Ominis Votum*, which was printed in 1656, and was occasioned, as we are told by Wood, by the summoning of extraordinary grand juries from the Baronets, Knights, &c., to serve in their several counties during the summer assizes.

FISHER.

Page 191.—Various passages in the history of Fisher countenance this belief. Having taken a degree at Magdalen College, Cambridge, he threw off his gown, and going over to Brabant, joined the Garrison of Bolduc. He remained there only a short time, and on his return to England was made an Ensign in the army sent against the Scots in 1639. In this expedition he formed an acquaintance with the poet Lovelace, and may, at the same time, have become intimate with Wither, who was, as we have seen, attached to one of the regiments. Fisher continued an active loyalist until the melancholy defeat on Marston Moor, when he fled to London in great

poverty, and attempted to replenish his purse by flattering the triumphant republicans. His reward did not correspond with his expectations, and he lingered on in penury until the Restoration, when he once more changed his political sentiments, and claimed a recompense for his alleged sufferings in the King's behalf. He expired in a coffee-house in the Old Bailey, on the 2nd of April, 1693, and was interred in the burial-ground of St. Sepulchre on the 6th of the same month. Wood admits the merit of some of his Latin verses, and he seems to have been a person of some learning and very little discretion.

Wither also prefixed verses to Drayton's *Poly-Olbion*, and comforted the author with the assurance that ages to come would "hug" his poesy. But these ages are not arrived yet.

LOVELACE.

Page 79.—Lovelace is not altogether unconnected with the life of Wither. The persecution he experienced arose from his declaration of respect to the King, in carrying up a petition in his favour to the House of Commons, from the county of Kent. For this act he was committed to the Gate-house at Westminster, where he was confined three or four months, and only obtained his liberation on giving security to a large amount, not to stir out of the lines of communication without a pass from the Speaker. Headley has quoted some verses by Andrew Marvel, referring to this imprisonment. He is addressing Lovelace on the publication of his *Lucasta*:—

Some reading your *Lucasta*, will allege
You wrong'd in her the house's privilege ;

Some, that you under sequestration are,
Because you write when going to the war—
And one the book prohibits, because Kent
The first petition by the author sent.

But though his own exertions were thus paralyzed, he furnished one of his brothers with funds to promote the cause of the Royalists, and supported another who was studying the art of war in Holland. After the execution of Charles he fell into a despondency, which was deepened by the indigence of his condition. From the most accomplished and courted of cavaliers, he was degraded to a wanderer and a beggar. His apparel, which had formerly been of "cloth of silver and gold," consisted only of a few miserable rags. Aubrey says, that for several months he had an allowance of twenty shillings a week, which was paid to him every Monday by George Pett, a haberdasher in Fleet-street. According to Wood, he died in a very mean lodging, near Shoe Lane, and was buried in the church of St. Bride. Aubrey says, his death happened in a cellar in Long Acre.

Lovelace had no inconsiderable portion of true poetic feeling. The latter part of the epitaph on Mrs. Filmer, has been imitated by Collins:—

But see, the rapid spheres stand still
And tune themselves unto her will;
Thus, although this marble must,
As all things, crumble into dust;
And though you find this fair-built tomb
Ashes, as what lies in its womb,
Yet, her saint-like name shall shine,
A living glory in this shrine,
And her eternal fame be read,
When all but very Virtue's dead!

HERRICK.

Page 192.—When Nichols wrote the *History of Leicestershire*, in 1798, the Farewell to Dean Bourn was remembered by some old persons of that parish, to whom it had been orally bequeathed by their ancestors. They had also a tradition that Herrick was the original author of *Poor Robin's Almanac*, first published in 1662. After his ejection from his preferment, he was thrown on his own resources, and the scheme of such a popular production was not unlikely to suggest itself.

QUARLES.

Page 214.—It happens, unfortunately for Quarles, that his beauties rarely exist in clusters; the perfect fruit can only be found after a careful search. This composition, on a verse in Proverbs, is interesting, as clearly manifesting the muscular force of the writer's mind:—

“Wilt thou set thine eyes upon that which is not? for riches make themselves wings—they flie away as an eagle.”—Proverbs xxiii. 8.

False world, thou ly'st: thou canst not lend

The least delight:

Thy favours cannot gain a friend,

They are so slight:

Thy morning pleasures make an end

To please at night.

Poor are the wants that thou suppliest;

And yet thou vaunt'st, and yet thou viest

With heaven; fond earth, thou boast'st; false world,
thou liest.

Thy babbling tongue tells golden tales

Of endless treasure;

Thy bounty offers easy sales

Of lasting pleasure.

Thou ask'st the conscience what she ails,
 And swear'st to ease her.
 There's none can want where thou suppliest,
 There's none can give where thou deniest.
 Alas ! fond world, thou boast'st ; false world, thou liest.
 What well-advised ear regards
 What earth can say ?
 Thy words are gold, but thy rewards
 Are painted clay ;
 Thy cunning can but pack the cards,
 Thou canst not play.
 Thy game at weakest, still thou viest
 If seen, and then revy'd, deniest—
 Thou art not what thou seem'st ; false world, thou liest.
 Thy tinsel bosome seems a mint
 Of new-coin'd treasure,
 A paradise that has no stint,
 No change, no measure ;
 A painted cask, but nothing in't,
 Nor wealth, nor pleasure.
 Vain earth ! that falsely thus compliest
 With man ; vain man ! that thou reliest
 On earth ; vain man, thou dot'st ; vain earth, thou liest
 What mean dull souls, in this high measure,
 To haberdash
 In earth's base wares, whose greatest treasure
 Is dross and trash ?
 The height of whose enchanting pleasure
 Is but a flash ?
 Are these the goods that thou suppliest
 Us mortals with ? Are these the highest ?
 Can these bring cordial peace ? False world, thou liest.
Emb., book ii.

Although Quarles failed in his attempts at comedy, all his works show considerable dramatic life and spirit. The Shepherd watching his flocks by night, is a pleasing picture :—

What strange affrights are these, that thus arrest
My lab'ring soul and spoil me of my rest !

— Sometimes methinks I hear
Loud whoops of triumph sounding in mine ear ;
Sometimes the music of celestial numbers
Sweetens my thoughts and casts my soul in slumbers,
And then the discord of infernal cries,
And horrid shrieks, awake my closing eyes ;
Methinks my trembling cot doth not allow
Such restful ease, as it was wont to do.
Pray God my flocks be safe ; my dreams foretell
Some strange designs ; pray God that all be well !
I'll up (for sure the wasted night grows old),
And if that need require, secure my fold.
Lord, how the heavens be spangled ! How each spark
Contends for greater brightness, to undark
The shades of night, and in a silent story
Declare the greatness of their Maker's glory !
But, hark ! am I deceived ? or does mine ear
Perceive a noise of footsteps drawing near ?
What midnight wanderer is grown so bold,
At such a season, to ramble near my fold ?
Sure 'tis some pilgrim burdened with the grief
Of a lost way, or else some nightly thief ;
Or else, perchance, some shepherd that doth fly
From his affrighted rest, as well as I.
No, 'tis some friend, or else my dog had ne'er
Been silent half so long. Ho ! who goes there ?

Shepherd's Oracle, p. 49.

Quarles divided his Prayers and Meditations into two parts. In the first, as Dr. Dibdin has remarked, he introduces various immoral characters, indulging themselves in commendations (under the most plausible modes of reasoning) of their particular habits and pursuits ; but immediately after, certain prohibitory texts

of Scripture occur to them, which produce contrition and remorse.

These are followed by a soliloquy on the heinousness of their sins, and by a prayer that they may be forgiven. I extract one of the characters entire.

THE CENSORIOUS MAN.

I KNOW there is much of the seed of the serpent in him, by his very looks, if his words betrayed him not. He hath eaten the egg of the cockatrice, and surely he remaineth in a state of perdition. He is not within the covenant, and abideth in the gall of bitterness. His studied prayers show him to be a high malignant, and his *Jesu-worship* concludes him Popishly affected. He comes not to our private meetings, nor contributes a penny to the cause. He cries up learning and the book of common prayer, and takes no arms to hasten reformation. He fears God for his own ends, for the spirit of Antichrist is in him. * * Wherefore my soul detesteth him, and I will have no conversation with him, for what fellowship hath light with darkness, or the pure in heart with the unclean? Sometimes he is a publican, sometimes a pharisee, and always a hypocrite. He rails against the altar as loud as we, and yet he cringes and makes an idol of the name of Jesus. He is quick-sighted to the infirmities of the Saints, and in his heart rejoices at our failings. He honours not a preaching ministry, and too much leans to a church-government. He paints devotion on his face, while pride is stamped within his heart. He places sanctity in the walls of a steeple-house, and adores the sacrament with his popish knee. His religion is a weather-cock, which turns its breast to every blast of wind. With the pure he seems pure, and with the wicked he will join in fellowship. A sober language is in his mouth, but the poison of asps is under his tongue. He is a Laodicean in his faith, a Nicolaitan in his works, a Pharisee in his disguise, and "I thank my God I am not as this man."

But stay, my soul; take heed whilst thou judge another, lest God judge thee. How comest thou so expert in another's heart, being so often deceived in thy own? A Saul to-day may prove a Paul to morrow. Take heed whilst thou wouldst seem religious, thou appear not uncharitable; and whilst thou judgest man, thou be not judged of God, who saith

Judge not, that ye be not judged.—MATTHEW vii. 1.

JOHN vii. 24.

Judge not according to the appearance, but judge righteous judgment.

ROMANS xiv. 10, 13.

But why dost thou judge thy brother? or why dost thou set at nought thy brother? We shall all stand before the judgment-seat of Christ.

Let us not, therefore, judge one another any more; but judge this rather, that no man put a stumbling-block, or an occasion to fall, in his brother's way.

1 COR. iv. 5.

Judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come; who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts.

PSALM L. 6.—GOD IS JUDGE HIMSELF.

HIS SOLILOQUY.

HAS thy brother, O my soul, a beam in his eye; and hast thou no mote in thine? Clear thine own, and thou wilt see the better to cleanse his. If a thief be in his candle, blow it not out, lest thou wrong the flame; but if thy snuffers be of gold, snuff it. Has he offended thee? forgive him: hath he trespassed against the congregation? reprove him: hath he sinned against God? pray for him. O my soul, how uncharitable hast thou been! how pharisaically hast thou judged. Being sick of the jaundice, how hast thou censured another

yellow, and with blotted fingers made his blur the greater! How has the pride of thy own heart blinded thee toward thyself! how quick-sighted to another! Thy brother has slipped, but thou hast fallen, and hast blanched thy own impiety with the publishing his sin. Like a fly, thou stingest his sores, and feedest on his corruptions. Jesus came eating and drinking, and was judged a glutton. John came fasting, and was challenged with being a devil. Judge not, my soul, lest thou be judged. Malign not thy brother, lest God laugh at thy destruction. Wouldst thou escape the punishment? judge thyself. Wouldst thou avoid the sin? humble thyself.

HIS PRAYER.

O GOD, that art the only searcher of the reins, to whom the secrets of the heart of man are only known, to whom alone the judgment of our thoughts, our words, and deeds, belong, and to whose sentence we must stand or fall,—I, a presumptuous sinner, that have thrust into thy place, and boldly have presumed to execute thy office, do here as humbly confess the insolence of mine attempt, and, with a sorrowful heart, repent me of my doings; and though my convinced conscience can look for nothing from thy wrathful hand but the same measure which I measured to another, yet, in the confidence of that mercy which thou hast promised to all those that truly and unfeignedly believe, I am become an humble suitor for thy gracious pardon. Lord, if thou search me but with a favourable eye, I shall appear much more unrighteous in *thy* sight than this my uncharitably-condemned brother did in *mine*. O, look not, Lord, upon me as I am, lest thou abhor me; but, through the merits of my blessed Saviour, cast a gracious eye upon me. Let his humility satisfy for my presumption, and let his meritorious sufferings answer for my vile uncharitableness. Let not the voice of my offence provoke thee with a stronger cry than the language of his intercession. Remove from me, O God, all spiritual pride, and make me little in my own conceit. Lord, light me to myself, that by thy light I may discern how dark I am.

Lighten that darkness by thy Holy Spirit, that I may search into my own corruptions: and since, O God, all gifts and graces are but nothing, and nothing can be acceptable in thy sight without charity, quicken the dulness of my faint affections, that I may love my brother as I ought. Soften my marble heart, that it may melt at his infirmities. Make me careful in the examination of my own ways, and most severe against my own offences. Pull out the beam of *mine own eye*, that I may see clearly and reprove wisely. Take from me, O Lord, all grudging, envy, and malice, that my seasonable reproofs may win my brother. Preserve my heart from all censorious thoughts, and keep my tongue from striking at his name. Grant that I make right use of his infirmities, and read good lessons in his failings; that loving him in thee, and thee in him, according to thy command, we may both be united in thee as members of thee: that thou mayest receive honour from our communion here, and we eternal glory from thee hereafter, in the world to come.

Quarles wrote a few lines *To the pretious Memory of Dr. Martin Luther*, before Thomas Hayne's account of that distinguished reformer, published in 1641. They begin well, but conclude in a strain which harmonizes with the accompanying effusion of Vicars. Hayne, after he had taken his Bachelor's Degree, became an Usher of Merchant Tailors' School, and afterwards, about 1612, of Christ's Hospital. Wood says, that he was a noted critic, an excellent linguist, and a solid divine, beloved of learned men, and particularly respected by Selden. He died on the 27th of July, 1645. A very long and laudatory character, which the affection of his friends had inscribed upon his monument, was consumed, together with the church where he lay, in the great fire of London. By his will he made a liberal bequest to his native village, near

Leicester; and Dr. Bliss mentions an unengraved portrait of him, which still exists in the library of that town.

The following simile is very ingenious and elegant:—

Even as the needle that directs the hour,
 (Touch'd with the load-stone) by the secret power
 Of hidden nature, points upon the pole;
 Even so the wavering powers of my soul,
 Touched by the virtue of thy Spirit, flee
 From what is earth, and point alone to Thee.

HERBERT.

Page 250.—Herbert's *Musæ Responsoriæ* consist of fifty Epigrams, intended as answers to a poem written by Melville, against the discipline of the established church. Three of them are inscribed to James, one to the Prince of Wales, one to the Bishop of Winchester, one to the people of Scotland, exhorting them to peace, one to those whom he supposed led astray by Melville and other writers of his persuasion; the last to the Deity, and the rest to Melville himself.—ZOUCH.

Page 264.—Sir Thomas Herbert relates, in the *Carolina Threnodia*, or Remains of the two last years of Charles the First, that the unfortunate monarch frequently read Bishop Andrews's Sermons, Hooker's *Ecclesiastical Polity*, Dr. Hammond's Works, Sandys's Paraphrase, the *Faery Queen*, &c., and Herbert's poems. To the hasty and contemptuous opinion expressed of the *Temple* by Mr. Headley, we may oppose the generous commendation of Mr. Coleridge, one of the most amiable and eloquent of modern poets. "Having mentioned the name of Herbert, that model of a man, a gentleman

and a clergyman, let me add, that the quaintness of some of his thoughts (not of his diction, than which nothing can be more pure, manly, and unaffected), has blinded modern readers to the great general merit of his poems, which are for the most part excellent in their kind."—*The Friend*, vol. i. p. 67. See also *Biograph. Literar.*, p. 98.

DUPORT.

Page 286.—Dr. Zouch says that Duport imbibed the very spirit of Homer. His versions of Job, the Song of Solomon, and the Psalms, go far to warrant this high eulogium. In the *Musæ Subsecivæ* (autore J. D. Cantab, 1676), Herbert's virtues are frequently celebrated. These lines occur on his life, by Walton:—

Tu quale vatis Templum ibi, et ubi cœlum et Deus ;
 Tu quale nobis, intuendum clericis
 Speculum Sacerdotale, tu qualem pius
 Pastoris ideam et libro et vitâ tuâ.
 Tu quale sancitatis, et mentis bonæ,
 Morumque nobis tradis exemplum, ac typum,
 Typum magistro scilicet tuo.

The criticism of Herbert's poetry (p. 320) is not so pleasing, because not so just.

CRASHAW.

Page 319.—"This story, as Mr. Lambe observes, has been paraphrased by Crashaw, Ambrose Philips, and others; none of those versions, however, can at all compare, for harmony and grace, with this before us."—Gifford's edition of the *Works of Ford*, vol. i. p. 14. Every editor assumes the right of elevating his own

hero; it is the Esquire vaunting the exploits of his Knight. In harmony and grace, superiority may, perhaps, be awarded to Ford; but in richness and fervour of style, what comparison can be instituted between him and Crashaw? Ford's imitation occurs in the *Lover's Melancholy*, which was published in 1629. Menaphon is recounting to Amethus a circumstance that happened to him one morning while he was in Thessaly:—

A sound of music touched mine ears, or rather
Indeed, entranced my soul. As I stole nearer,
Invited by the melody, I saw
This youth, this fair-faced youth, upon his lute,
With strains of strange variety and harmony;
Proclaiming, as it seemed so bold a challenge
To the clear choristers of the woods, the birds,
That as they flock'd about him, all stood silent,
Wond'ring at what they heard.—I wonder'd too—

Amet. And so do I,—good! on—

Men. A nightingale,

Nature's best musician, undertakes
The challenge; and for every several strain
The well-shaped youth could touch, she sung her own:
He could not run division with more art
Upon his quaking instrument, than she,
The nightingale, did with her various notes
Reply to * * *

Amet. How did the rivals part?

Men. You term them rightly;

For they were rivals, and their mistress, harmony.
Some time thus spent, the young man grew at last
Into a pretty anger, that a bird
Whom art had never taught cliffs, moods, or notes,
Should vie with him for mastery, whose study
Had busied many hours to perfect practice.
To end the controversy, in a rapture,
Upon his instrument he plays so swiftly,

So many voluntaries, and so quick,
That there was curiosity and cunning,
Concord in discord, lines of different method
Meeting in one full centre of delight.

Italian poetry contains some exquisite versions of this story.

Page 324.—I cannot resist the temptation of adding a few lines from Crashaw's version of the 23d Psalm :

Pleasure sings my soul to rest,
Plenty wears me at her breast—

* * * * *

Come now, all ye terrors, sally,
Muster forth into the valley,
Where triumphant darkness hovers
With a sable wing that covers
Brooding horror. Come, thou Death,
Let the damps of thy dull breath
Overshadow even the shade,
And make darkness' self afraid—
There my feet, even there shall find
May for a resolved mind;
Still my Shepherd, still my God,
Thou art with me—

* * * * *

How my head in ointment swims !
How my cup o'erlooks her brims,
Still may thy sweet mercy spread
A shady arm above my head,
About my path, so shall I find
The fair centre of my mind
Thy temple, and those lovely walls
Bright ever with the beam that falls
Fresh from the pure glance of thine eye,
Lighting to Eternity.

MORE.

Page 334.—There was a playful simplicity about all his expressions. After completing a work on which he had been long engaged, he said,—“ Now for these three months, I will neither think a wise thought, nor speak a wise word, nor do an ill thing.” He used often to remark, that he found it one of the hardest things in the world not to over study himself; and when he was writing his *Exposition of the Apocalypse*, he observed, that *his nag* (as he called his imagination) *was but over-free, and went even faster than he almost desired, but he thought it was the right way.* But when his toil was over, he shared the weariness and exhaustion which result from literary exertion, and he complained to his friends that the earthly house was a poor habitation for its immortal guest. More, indeed, underwent all the drudgery of authorship, his works being fairly transcribed by his own hand. Pope is known to have wished himself dead while translating Homer; and More, in his moments of irritation, assured his friends that when he got his hands out of the fire, he would not very suddenly thrust them in again. He seems to have shone in colloquial intercourse. His remarks often possess the terseness which gave such animation to the manner of Johnson.

Speaking of criticism and quotations, he said, that it was *like going over ploughed lands*; and in allusion to the copiousness of his fancy, he once observed, that he *was forced to cut his way through a crowd of thoughts as through a wood.*

ADDITIONAL NOTES.

Page 98.—In the recently-published part of the *Bibliographer's Manual*, Mr. Lowndes mentions a copy of *Fidelia*, in the possession of Sir M. Sykes, bearing the date of 1617.

Page 197.—In Dyer's *Supplement to the History of the University of Cambridge*, Quarles is said to have taken his Bachelor's Degree in 1608.

Page 198.—In Ogborne's *History of Essex*, pt. i. p. 160, it is stated, that Quarles remained in the service of the Queen of Bohemia about four years. This statement is without any authentication.

THE END.

ERRATA.

Page 2, *for* advances, *read* advance.

94, *for* 1612, *read* 1620.

295, *for* are involved, *read* is involved.

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